Food Standards Agency
food.gov.uk

# SAFER FOOD BETTER BUSINESS FOR CATERERS

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# FOOD HYGIENE RATINGS

## INTRODUCTION TO FOOD HYGIENE RATINGS


Following a food safety inspection from your local council, your business will receive a Food Hygiene Rating as part of the national Food Hygiene Rating Scheme.

Food Hygiene Ratings help customers choose where to eat or buy food – high ratings are good for business.

Ratings are a snapshot of the standards of food hygiene & safety found at the time of inspection, however it is the responsibility of the business to comply with food law at all times.

**Your Food Hygiene Rating is based on:**

- Hygienic handling of food including preparation, cooking, re-heating, cooling and storage
- Cleanliness and condition of facilities and building - including appropriate layout, ventilation, hand washing facilities and pest control
- Hygienic management of food safety including the system or checks in place to ensure food sold or served is safe to eat, and that food safety is always well managed and good standards maintained

## UNDERSTANDING FOOD HYGIENE RATINGS


**Following an inspection your business will be given a rating between 0 and 5:**

**5** - hygiene standards are very good

**4** - hygiene standards are good

**3** - hygiene standards are generally satisfactory

**2** - some improvement is necessary

**1** - major improvement is necessary

**0** - urgent improvement is required

Using this pack properly, following the safe methods and completing the diary correctly will help ensure you are complying with the law and maximise your Food hygiene Rating.

If you run a food business in Wales or Northern Ireland you must display your Food Hygiene Rating sticker at each entrance where it can clearly be seen by customers. Food businesses in England are encouraged to do the same.

Following an inspection, businesses can appeal their rating, have a 'right to reply' and can request a re-visit from their local council.

## WHERE CAN I GET MORE INFORMATION?

The Environmental Health Team at your local council will be able to provide more advice on how to make sure you have a good food hygiene rating. Every business should be able to achieve a 5 - Very Good.

More information is available on **the FSA website**.

If unsure about any of the guidance in this pack, you can contact the Environmental Health Team at your local council.

# WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW BEFORE YOU START

**It is easy for you to spread bacteria and viruses to food without realising. These bacteria are invisible and could make customers ill. Your personal hygiene is important. This is what you need to do to keep food safe:**

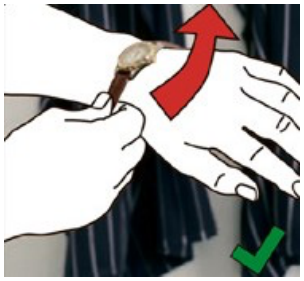
## BEFORE YOU START WORKING WITH FOOD


Always wash your hands

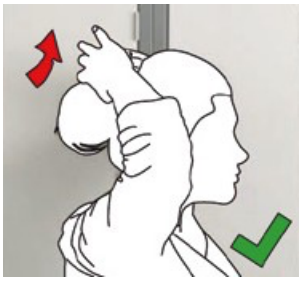
Wear clean clothes

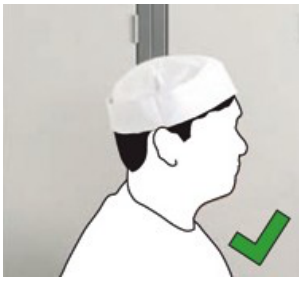
Wear an apron if handling unwrapped food

Tell your manager if you have vomiting or diarrhoea and do not work with food



Take off your watch and jewellery





It is a good idea to tie hair back and wear a hat or hairnet

## WHEN YOU ARE WORKING WITH FOOD

No smoking

No eating or drinking

Avoid touching your face, coughing or sneezing over food


Cover cuts with a brightly coloured waterproof dressing

## WASHING HANDS EFFECTIVELY


**Step 1:** Wet your hands thoroughly under warm running water and squirt liquid soap onto your palm

**Step 2:** Rub your hands together palm to palm to make a lather

**Step 3:** Rub the palm of one hand along the back of the other and along the fingers. Repeat with the other hand

**Step 4:** Put your palms together with fingers interlocked and rub in between each of the fingers thoroughly


**Step 5:** Rub around your thumbs on each hand and then rub the fingertips of each hand against your palms


**Step 6:** Rinse off the soap with clean running water and dry your hands thoroughly on a disposable towel. Turn off the tap with the towel and then throw the towel away

## WHEN TO WASH HANDS

Before touching or handling any food, especially ready-to-eat food

After going to the toilet

After every break

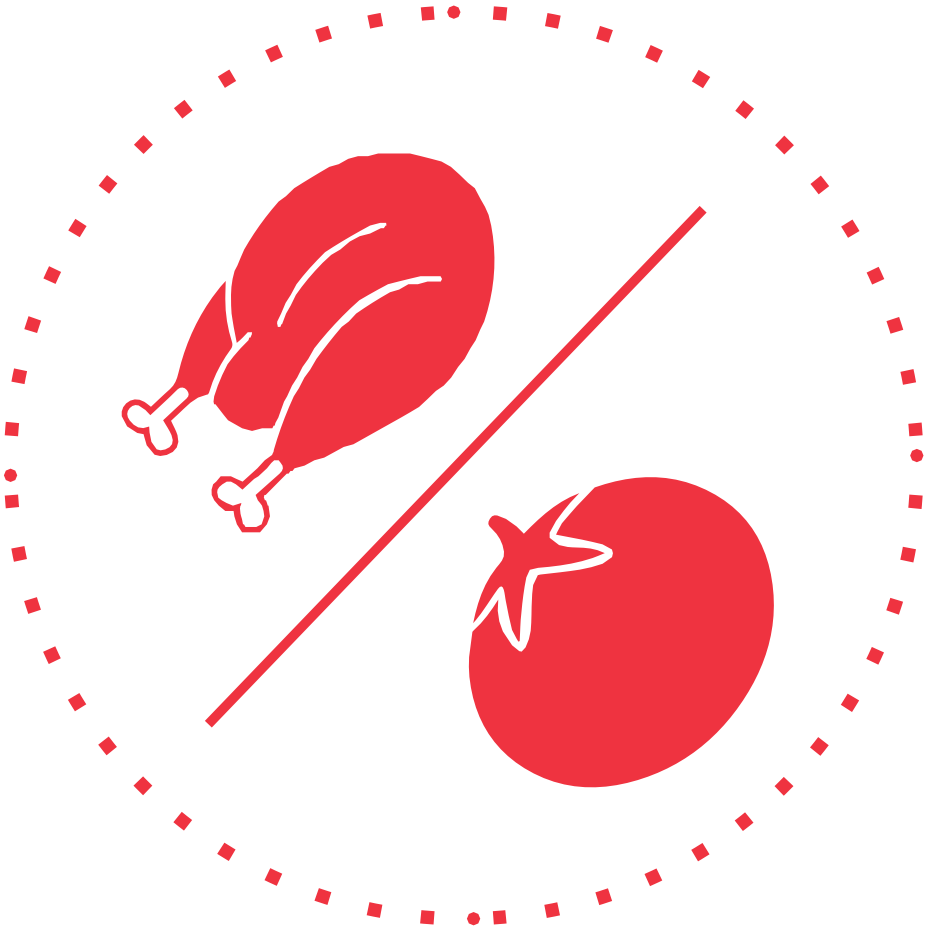
After touching raw meat, poultry, fish, eggs or unwashed vegetables


After touching a cut or changing a dressing

After touching or emptying bins

After any cleaning

After touching phones, light switches, door handles, cash registers and money



# CROSS-CONTAMINATION

**Cross-contamination is one of the most common causes of food poisoning. It happens when harmful bacteria, viruses or allergens are spread onto food from other food, surfaces, hands or equipment.**

## Cross-contamination is one of the most common causes of food poisoning. It happens when harmful bacteria or viruses are spread onto food from other food, surfaces, hands or equipment.

These harmful bacteria often come from raw meat/poultry, fish, eggs and unwashed vegetables. **It is particularly important to ensure that ready-to-eat foods are not contaminated in this way.**

Other sources of bacteria can include:

- staff
- pests
- equipment
- cloths
- dirt or soil

When you handle raw and ready-to-eat food in your business you may need to consider extra procedures to help keep the food you produce safe. More information can be found on **the FSA website** Do not forget that you should also protect food from 'physical contamination' (where objects get into food, e.g. broken glass or pieces of packaging) and 'chemical contamination' (where chemicals get into food, e.g. cleaning products or pest control chemicals).

This section also includes information on food allergies. Good cleaning and handling practices can help manage the risk of cross-contamination from allergens.

SAFE METHOD:

# PERSONAL HYGIENE AND FITNESS TO WORK

**It is vital for staff to follow good personal hygiene practices to help prevent bacteria and viruses from spreading to food.**

| SAFETY POINT | WHY? | HOW DO YOU DO THIS? |
|---|---|---|
| Staff should always wash their hands thoroughly before handling and preparing food. (See the 'Handwashing' method in the Cleaning section.) | Handwashing is one of the best ways to prevent harmful bacteria and viruses from spreading. | Are all staff trained to wash their hands before preparing food?<br>Yes [4] No |
| All staff should wear clean clothes when working with food. Ideally, they should change into clean work clothes before starting work and not wear these clothes outside food preparation areas. | Clothes can bring dirt and bacteria into food preparation areas. Wearing clean clothes helps to prevent this. | Do your staff wear clean work clothes?<br>Yes [4] No<br>Do your staff change clothes before starting work?<br>Yes No [4] |
| Work clothes should be appropriate for staff duties and protect food from contamination. Ideally, they should be light - coloured with no external pockets. It is also a good idea to wear a clean apron or disposable apron over work clothes. | Work clothes should minimise skin coming into contact with food and prevent hairs, fibres and the contents of pockets (which can carry bacteria) getting into food. Light colours show dirt clearly. | Describe your staff's work clothes here:<br>Volunteer Dress Code policy (DV14) should cover this. |
| Staff should change aprons after working with raw food e.g. meat, poultry, eggs or unwashed vegetables. | Aprons help to stop dirt and bacteria from getting onto work clothes and they can be removed easily for washing, or thrown away if disposable. | What type of aprons do you use?<br>Fabric - washed daily<br>Plastic - disposable<br>Which tasks do you use them for?<br>Burgundy in kitchen<br>Blue for SU cooking activities<br>Disposable - cleaning |
| It is good practice for staff to keep hair tied back and wear a hat when preparing food.  | If hair is not tied back or covered, it is more likely to fall into food and staff are more likely to touch their hair.  | Do staff keep hair tied back?<br>Yes [4] No<br>Do staff wear hats or hairnets when preparing food?<br>Yes No |
| Staff should not wear watches or jewellery when preparing food (except a plain wedding band). | Watches and jewellery can collect and spread dirt and harmful bacteria, and fall into the food. | Do your staff take off watches and jewellery before preparing food?<br>Yes No |
| Staff should not smoke, drink, eat or chew gum while handling food. Staff should also avoid touching their face or nose, or coughing and sneezing over or near food, and wash hands if they do. | All of these lead to staff touching their face or mouth. Harmful bacteria can be spread from someone's face or mouth to their hands and then onto food. | Are staff trained not to do these things?<br>Yes [4] No |

## FITNESS FOR WORK

| SAFETY POINT | WHY? | HOW DO YOU DO THIS? |
|---|---|---|
| Staff should be 'fit for work' at all times. This means that they must not be suffering from, or carrying, an illness or disease that could cause a problem with food safety. | People who are not 'fit for work' could spread harmful bacteria or viruses to food. See **the FSA website** for more information. | Do your food handlers understand the importance of being 'fit for work' and what they need to report?<br>Yes 4 No |
| Any member of staff who has diarrhoea and/or vomiting should report it to their manager immediately and either stay at home or go home straight away. | People suffering from these symptoms often carry harmful bacteria on their hands and can spread them to food or equipment they touch. | |
| Staff who have had diarrhoea and/ or vomiting should not return to work until they have had no symptoms for 48 hours. | Even if the diarrhoea and vomiting has stopped, someone can still carry harmful bacteria for 48 hours afterwards. | Do you check food handlers have been free of symptoms for 48 hours before returning to work?<br>Yes 4 No |
| Staff should tell their manager if they have any cuts or sores and these should be completely covered with a brightly coloured waterproof dressing. | Cuts and sores can carry harmful bacteria. Covering them prevents bacteria spreading to food. Coloured waterproof dressings can be seen more easily if they drop into food. | |

| WHAT TO DO IF THINGS GO WRONG | HOW TO STOP THIS HAPPENING AGAIN |
|---|---|
| • If staff are not 'fit for work', move them out of food handling areas or send them home. Throw away any unwrapped foods they have handled. | • Train staff again on this safe method.<br>• Improve staff supervision. |

**Write down what went wrong and what you did about it in your diary.**

| MANAGE IT | WHY? | HOW DO YOU DO THIS? |
|---|---|---|
| Make sure that all staff understand the importance of being 'fit for work' and what they need to report. | This is so they understand how some types of illness can affect the safety of food and that they must tell their manager if they have these types of illness. | Make a note in your diary of when you have trained staff on this safe method. |
| It is a good idea to have a separate area where staff can change and store their outdoor clothes. | Clothes could be a source of bacteria if they are left lying around. | Where do staff change and store their outdoor clothes?<br>Empowerment area<br>Lockers and coat stand |
| It is good practice to keep a clean set of work clothes or disposable aprons for visitors. | Anyone entering the kitchen can bring in bacteria on their clothes. | Where do you keep clean uniforms/ disposable aprons?<br>Clean aprons - fabric and disposable are stored in the utility/ hand washing room. |

SAFE METHOD:

# CLOTHS

**Cloths can be one of the top causes of cross-contamination in the kitchen. It is essential to use them safely to prevent bacteria and allergens from spreading.**

| SAFETY POINT | WHY? |
|---|---|
| Use disposable cloths wherever possible, and throw them away after each task. | This will make sure that any bacteria and allergens picked up by the cloth will not be spread. |
| Always use a new or freshly cleaned and disinfected cloth to wipe work surfaces, equipment or utensils that will be used with ready-to-eat food.<br>Cloths can't be used for both floors and other surfaces. | It is especially important to protect ready-to-eat food from bacteria. This is because the food will not be cooked, so any bacteria on the food will not be killed. |
| Take away re-usable cloths for thorough washing and disinfection after using them with raw meat/poultry, eggs or raw vegetables – and surfaces that have touched these foods. | Raw meat/poultry and eggs are more likely to contain harmful bacteria than other foods. The soil on vegetables can also contain harmful bacteria. |
| If using re-usable cloths, make sure they are thoroughly washed, disinfected and dried properly between tasks (not just when they look dirty).<br>Ideally, wash cloths in a washing machine on a very hot cycle. A suitably high temperature can be obtained using a hot cycle of 90°C.<br>If you wash and disinfect cloths by hand, make sure all the food and dirt has been removed by washing in hot soapy water before you disinfect them. After washing, you can disinfect by using boiling water or a suitable disinfectant, following the manufacturer's instructions (please note bleach is not a suitable disinfectant). | Using dirty cloths can spread bacteria and allergens very easily. Cloths that are not dried properly can increase the risk of bacteria.<br>A hot wash cycle will clean the cloths thoroughly and kill bacteria (disinfect).<br>If food or dirt is still on the cloths, this will prevent the disinfection process from being effective, so harmful bacteria might not be killed. |

## HOW DO YOU DO THIS?

How do you clean re-usable cloths?

At the end of each shift dirty tea towels and any dirty oven gloves should be placed in the 'kitchen wash basket' in the laundry room. This is separate from shower laundry basket.

# DIFFERENT CLOTHS FOR DIFFERENT JOBS

| JOBS | THE BEST CLOTH FOR THE JOB | DO YOU DO THIS? | IF NOT, WHAT DO YOU DO? |
|---|---|---|---|
| Holding hot items (e.g. oven trays) – use tea towel or chef's cloth |  | Yes [4] | Oven cloth with mits |
| Washing up dishes – use a dish cloth |  | Yes [4] | Blue clothes have been used for food prep surface and replaced daily.<br>Green clothes have been used for cleaning the bathroom areas. |
| Use disposable cloths or paper towels for the following jobs:<br>Wiping surfaces |  | Yes [4] | We are moving to only using rolls of blue paper. This will be single use and then thrown away. |
| Mopping up spills | | Yes [4] | Mops are also colour coded:<br>Grey bucket kitchen areas<br>Green bucket bathroom area |
| Wiping hands |  | Yes [4] | Green paper towels from dispensers in kitchen, utility and bathrooms. |
| Wiping sides of dishes before serving | | Yes [4] | Blue paper |
| Drying ingredients | | Yes [4] | Blue paper |

| WHAT TO DO IF THINGS GO WRONG | HOW TO STOP THIS HAPPENING AGAIN |
|---|---|
| • If you notice dirty cloths in the kitchen, remove them for cleaning immediately or throw them away.<br>• If you think your staff have used a dirty cloth, wash, disinfect and dry any equipment, work surfaces or utensils it has touched and throw away any food that might have been contaminated. | • Consider using disposable cloths if you are not using them already.<br>• Increase your supply of disposable/clean cloths.<br>• Train staff again on this safe method.<br>• Improve supervision. |

## Write down what went wrong and what you did about it in your diary.

| MANAGE IT | WHY? | HOW DO YOU DO THIS? | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Have a special place in the kitchen for dirty re-usable cloths before they are washed and used again. | This is to prevent them being re-used before they have been washed. | Where do staff put dirty re-usable cloths? | Tea-towels in laundry wash basket. |
| Always keep a good supply of disposable/clean cloths in your kitchen. | Staff are more likely to use clean cloths if plenty are available. | Where do you keep new/clean cloths? | Under the kitchen sink.<br>Laundry room. |

SAFE METHOD:

# SEPARATING FOODS

**Keeping raw and ready-to-eat food separate is essential to prevent harmful bacteria from spreading. Raw foods include raw meats & unwashed salad, vegetables and fruits. Ready-to-eat foods include cooked foods, washed salads, garnishes, desserts and other foods that will not be cooked before eating.**

*For more information on separating foods visit **the FSA website***

| SAFETY POINT | WHY? | HOW DO YOU DO THIS? |
|---|---|---|
| **Delivery and collection**<br>Plan delivery times so that, if possible, raw foods arrive at different times to other foods. If delivered together, raw and ready-to-eat foods must be kept separate. | This helps to prevent harmful bacteria spreading from raw foods to ready-to-eat foods. | When do deliveries come?<br>Stock report. Deliveries logged and stored appropriately within 15mins.<br>Make a note in your diary. |
| **Storage**<br>Ideally, store raw and ready-to-eat food in separate fridges, freezers and display units. If they are in the same unit, store raw meat, poultry, fish and eggs below ready-to-eat food. Unwashed fruit and vegetables should also be kept separate from ready-to-eat food and above raw meat.<br>Use either separate containers for raw & ready-to-eat foods or clean and heat disinfect between uses.<br>Cover cooked foods and other raw and ready-to-eat food using lids, foil or cling film. Coverings for raw and ready to eat foods should be kept separate. | This helps to prevent harmful bacteria spreading from raw food to ready-to-eat food. | How do you make sure raw and ready-to-eat food is stored separately?<br>Freeze<br>Fridge ordering<br>Separate plastic containers<br>Cling film and labelled.<br>Are separate containers used for raw and ready-to-eat foods?<br>Yes 4 No<br>If not, are containers cleaned and disinfected between used?<br>Yes 4 No |
| **Defrosting**<br>Keep raw foods that are defrosting in the fridge in a covered container, below ready-to-eat food, or in a separate area of the kitchen away from other foods. (See the 'Defrosting' method in the Chilling section.) | When raw foods are defrosting, the liquid that comes out can contain harmful bacteria, which could spread to other foods. | Where do you defrost foods?<br>Preferably base of fridge overnight or kitchen drainer overnight. |
| **Preparation**<br>Prepare raw foods in different areas. If this is not possible, separate by preparing them at different times to ready-to-eat foods and thoroughly clean and disinfect between tasks using the '2 stage clean'.<br>Where possible, ready-to-eat food preparation should take place before raw food preparation.<br>Dedicated colour coded chopping boards and utensils should be used. | Harmful bacteria from raw meat/ poultry can spread from chopping boards and knives to other foods.<br>  | **Which of the following controls do you have in place?**<br>Different areas for raw and ready-to-eat food preparation<br>Yes No 4<br>Same areas used for raw and ready-to-eat food preparation, separated by time and cleaning/disinfection<br>Yes 4 No<br>Separate, colour-coded utensils for raw and ready-to-eat-food<br>Yes 4 No |
| Do not wash raw meat or poultry. | Washing meat does not kill bacteria and allergens, but it can splash harmful bacteria around the kitchen contaminating sinks, taps and surfaces and ready-to-eat food. | More information can be found on **the FSA website.** |

| SAFETY POINT | WHY? | HOW DO YOU DO THIS? |
|---|---|---|
| Wash unwashed vegetables, salad and fruit in a separate, dedicated sink under running water.<br>Where this is not possible, and the sink is used for other tasks, clean and disinfect the sink and use a dedicated bowl to protect the food during washing. Then place in a colander for a final rinse under running water.<br>Further information on two stage cleaning is in the 'Cleaning Effectively' section. | To remove soil residues (which may contain bacteria) and pesticides on the fruit, salad and vegetables which may stop it being safe to eat. | Do you have a separate sink for washing fruit, salad and vegetables?<br>Yes No [4]<br><br>If not, do you clean and disinfect your sink using a two stage clean between uses and place fruit, salad and vegetables into a suitable container under running water?<br>Yes [4] No |
| Always use separate equipment, such as vacuum packers, slicers or mincers, for raw and ready-to-eat food. | It is not possible to remove harmful bacteria from complex machinery and these bacteria can spread to food. | Do you use different complex equipment for raw and ready-to-eat food preparation (e.g. mincers, etc)?<br>Yes No |
| **Cooking, e.g. grill, barbecue**<br>When you add raw meat make sure it does not touch or drip onto the food already cooking or onto ready-to-eat foods.<br>Remember to wash hands after handling raw meat or its packaging. | Bacteria could spread from the raw meat to the other food and stop it being safe to eat. | How do you keep raw meat separate from food already cooking?<br>Cook raw meat first.<br><br>Sealed with clingfilm or in plastic zip bags.<br>Lidded plastic containers of different sizes.<br>Base of fridge.<br><br>Do you have separate probes for raw and ready-to-eat food temperature checks?<br>Yes [4] No |

## THINK TWICE!

**Equipment with moving parts**

You should not use the same equipment, such as vacuum packing machines, slicers and mincers, for both raw and ready-to-eat food. These are complex pieces of machinery with lots of moving parts and it is very difficult to clean them sufficiently, so bacteria from raw food could easily be transferred to ready-to-eat food.

To clean this equipment effectively, it needs to be taken apart. (Vacuum packing machines require a specialist to do this.) If you are unsure of what to do, check with the Environmental Health Team at your local council.

| WHAT TO DO IF THINGS GO WRONG | HOW TO STOP THIS HAPPENING AGAIN |
|---|---|
| • If you think that ready-to-eat food has not been kept separate from raw food, throw away the food.<br>• If equipment/surfaces/utensils have been touched by raw food, wash, disinfect and dry them to prevent harmful bacteria from spreading. | • Train staff again on this safe method.<br>• Improve staff supervision.<br>• Re-organise delivery times, storage and food preparation to make it easier to keep food separate.<br>• Make sure you have enough storage space and it is well organised. |

**Write down what went wrong and what you did about it in your diary.**

SAFE METHOD:

# FOOD ALLERGIES

**It is important to know what to do if you serve a customer who has a food allergy, because these allergies can be life-threatening. By law, you must tell your customers if certain food allergens are in the food you prepare (see the section on the next page).**

*You also need to refer to and complete the 'Managing Food Allergen information' pages in the Management section of this pack. All of the FSA's information, guidance and templates are available on* ***the FSA website****.*

| SAFETY POINT | WHY? | HOW DO YOU DO THIS? |
|---|---|---|
| **Delivery and Collection**<br>Make sure, at the point of delivery, you label the food and check you have all the ingredient information you need from the supplier. | | |
| **Preparation**<br>Make sure you do not contaminate foods for an allergic consumer while you are preparing food for them.<br>Check the labelling information to make sure that any ingredients used to prepare the dish do not contain the food they are allergic to, including oils, dressings, glazes, sauces and garnishes.<br>If the labels of any of the ingredients you are using to prepare that dish say they may contain certain food allergens or are not suitable for certain food allergy sufferers, you need to let the customer know and ask them if they still wish to order.<br>When you have been asked to prepare a dish that does not contain a certain food, make sure work surfaces and equipment have been thoroughly cleaned first. Make sure staff wash their hands thoroughly before preparing the dish. You should also have separate preparation boards and equipment dedicated to allergy-free meals.<br>If you make a mistake when preparing a dish for a customer with a food allergy, do not just remove the ingredient containing the allergen from the dish and still serve the food - start from scratch with fresh ingredients.<br>Remember: unlike bacteria, allergens are always present in the food and cannot be removed or destroyed by cooking. | This helps to prevent small amounts of the food that a person is allergic to getting into the dish accidentally, **which could prove fatal.** | How do you prepare foods for allergic consumers?<br>Check for allergens on intake and storage.<br>Remove,store or contain allergens separately eg no nuts, wrap celery, contain eggs, shelf/ container for dairy.<br>Display allergen poster in kitchen and food store.<br>Display FSA Food Allergy or Intolerance poster for SUs in Crisis area, and food parcel store.<br>Prepare food with allergens separately, wash hands and disinfect areas before and after - different coloured prep boards.<br>Record and label allergens in daily meal prep and serving. Throw away and start again if there is a concern. |
| **Storage**<br>It is important to make sure all foods are labelled clearly listing the allergens in the food, fully covered, resealed or placed into sealed containers if needed and any food spillages in storage areas/equipment are cleaned up quickly. Make sure you clearly label containers with the ingredients. | Allergens can easily be transferred from one food to another meaning allergen-free foods can become contaminated and no longer allergen-free. This poses a risk to a customer with a food allergy being served food and suffering an allergic reaction. | How do you store foods once opened?<br>Clearly labelled containers. |
| **Service & Take Away Orders**<br>Cross contamination of a food allergy customer's orders can take place during transport from your business to the customer's home and during service. You should take steps to prevent contamination such as keeping the food for the customer with an allergy separate, labelled and covered well.<br>During service, it is also important to ensure that the right meal is served to the correct person. | If a food allergy customer's order is contaminated with allergens, they could suffer an allergic reaction. | How do you prevent contamination from allergens in take away orders?<br>New fresh take-away cups and boxes stored in a separate cupboard.<br>Separate labelled containers handed personally to SU. |

## THINK TWICE!

### Which ingredients can cause a problem?

You must provide information about allergens to your customers if they are used as ingredients in the food and drink that you provide. You can find further information on **the FSA website**

These are some of the foods people may be allergic to and where they may be found:

| | |
|---|---|
| **Nuts** (Namely almonds, hazelnuts, walnuts, pecan nuts, Brazil nuts, pistachio, cashew, Macadamia or Queensland nut). | In sauces, desserts, crackers, bread, ice cream, marzipan, ground almonds, nut oils. |
| **Peanuts** | In sauces, cakes, desserts. Don't forget groundnut oil and peanut flour. |
| **Eggs** | In cakes, mousses, sauces, pasta, quiche, some meat products. Don't forget foods containing mayonnaise or brushed with egg. |
| **Milk** | In yoghurt, cream, cheese, butter, milk powders. Also check for foods glazed with milk. |
| **Fish** | In some salad dressings, pizzas, relishes, fish sauce. You might also find fish in some soy and Worcestershire sauces. |
| **Crustaceans** | Such as prawns, lobster, scampi, crab, shrimp paste. |
| **Molluscs** | These include mussels, whelks, squid, land snails, oyster sauce. |
| **Cereals containing gluten (namely wheat (such as spelt and Khorasan wheat), barley, rye and oats)** | Also check foods containing flour, such as bread, pasta, cakes, pastry, meat products, sauces, soups, batter, stock cubes, breadcrumbs, foods dusted with flour. |
| **Celery** | This includes celery stalks, leaves and seeds and celeriac. Also look out for celery in salads, soups, celery salt, some meat products. |
| **Lupin** | Lupin seeds and flour in some types of bread and pastries. |
| **Mustard** | Including liquid mustard, mustard cress, mustard powder and mustard seeds, in salad dressings, marinades, soups, sauces, curries, meat products. |
| **Sesame seeds** | In bread, breadsticks, tahini, houmous, sesame oil. |
| **Soya** | As tofu or beancurd, edamame, tempeh, soya flour and textured soya protein, in some ice cream, sauces, desserts, meat products, vegetarian products. |
| **Sulphur dioxide** (when added and above 10mg/ kg in the finished food and drink) | In meat products, fruit juice drinks, dried fruit and vegetables, wine, beer. |

## WHAT TO DO IF THINGS GO WRONG

If you think a customer is having a severe allergic reaction:

- do not move them
- ring 999 and ask for an ambulance with a paramedic straight away
- explain that your customer could have anaphylaxis (pronounced 'anna-fill-axis')
- send someone outside to wait for the ambulance
- if the customer has an adrenalin or Epi pen, help them to get it.

## HOW TO STOP THIS HAPPENING AGAIN

- Make sure all your staff understand how important it is to check all the contents of a dish if asked by someone who has a food allergy.
- Make sure you keep accurate and updated ingredient information for all ready-made products and staff know to check it.
- Review the way that staff prepare a dish for someone with a food allergy - are they cleaning effectively first and using clean equipment?
- Improve the descriptions on your menu.
- Train staff again on this safe method.
- Improve supervision.

**Write down what went wrong and what you did about it in your diary.**

SAFE METHOD:

# PHYSICAL AND CHEMICAL CONTAMINATION

**It is very important to prevent objects and chemicals getting into food.**

| SAFETY POINT | WHY? |
|---|---|
| Follow the manufacturer's instructions on how to use and store cleaning chemicals. Store cleaning chemicals separately from food and make sure they are clearly labelled. | This is to prevent these chemicals getting into food.  |
| Keep food covered. | This helps to stop things falling into the food.  |
| Make sure you control pests effectively. (See the 'Pest control' safe method.) | This is to stop insects, droppings etc. getting into food, as well as preventing the spread of bacteria. |
| Make sure that any chemicals you use to control pests are used and stored in the correct way and clearly labelled. | This is to prevent these chemicals getting into food. |
| Always clear and clean as you go and take care to throw away packaging, string etc. as soon as you remove it. (See the 'Clear and clean as you go' safe method in the Cleaning section.) | Keeping surfaces clear and clean will help prevent chemicals and objects getting into food, as well as preventing the spread of bacteria.  |
| Repair or replace any equipment or utensils that are damaged or have loose parts. | Loose parts may get into food by accident.  |
| It is a good idea to have a rule of no glass in the kitchen. | This helps to prevent broken glass getting into food. |

| WHAT TO DO IF THINGS GO WRONG | HOW TO STOP THIS HAPPENING AGAIN |
|---|---|
| • If chemicals or objects, such as glass, insects or coloured waterproof dressings get into food, throw the food away.<br>• If you find pests or signs of pests, take action immediately. (See the 'Pest control' safe method.)<br>• If you find objects in food that has been delivered, reject the delivery, if possible, and contact your supplier immediately. | • Review how you use and store chemicals in your business.<br>• Review your pest control arrangements.<br>• Train staff again on this safe method.<br>• Improve staff supervision. |

**Write down what went wrong and what you did about it in your diary.**

## THINK TWICE!

When you clean work surfaces, make sure that any cleaning chemicals you use are suitable for surfaces touched by food. Check the manufacturer's instructions on how they should be used.

## THINK TWICE!

### Covering foods

It is important to keep food covered to help protect it from harmful bacteria. This is especially important for cooked food and other ready-to-eat food. Always use containers or bags that have been designed to store food. Suggested food coverings include kitchen foil, cling film, plastic boxes with lids or freezer bags. Keep unused food coverings clean and separate from food.

When you are covering food:

- Check the manufacturer's instructions to see if the covering is suitable for what you are using it for.
- Always make sure that the food is properly covered.
- Take care not to let the covering fall into foods.
- Never re-use foil, cling film or freezer bags and do not store food in opened tins.
- Make sure that plastic boxes are washed, disinfected and dried between uses.

Avoid re-using food packaging to store food. Often packaging is designed to be used once with a certain food, so it might not be safe to use it again, or to use it with a different food. If food packaging is used in a way that it was not designed for, chemicals could transfer into the food. Instead, use re-usable containers that have been designed to store food.

SAFE METHOD:

# PEST CONTROL

**Effective pest control is essential to keep pests out of your premises and prevent them from spreading harmful bacteria.**

| SAFETY POINT | WHY? | HOW DO YOU DO THIS? |
|---|---|---|
| Check your premises regularly for signs of pests.<br>You could employ a pest control contractor. See the 'Suppliers and contractors' safe method in the Management section. | Pests carry harmful bacteria. | When do you check for pests?<br>Regular food cupboard surveillance, clearing and cleaning. Bin days. We choose not to use the council food waste bin because it meant leaving it out for collection for four days. SHBC for Pest control.<br>Do you employ a pest control contractor?<br>Yes 4 No |
| Check deliveries thoroughly for signs of pests. Do not accept a delivery if it shows signs of pests such as gnawed packaging or insects, e.g. beetles. | Pests could come into your premises in a delivery. | How do you check deliveries?<br>As food is signed in. |
| Keep external areas tidy and free from weeds. Make sure bins have close-fitting lids and are easy to clean and clean and disinfect regularly. | Weeds and rubbish can attract pests and provide them with food and shelter. | How often do you check external areas?<br>Daily as fill bin.<br>Weekly bin day removal. |

| TYPE OF PEST | | SIGNS OF PEST |
|---|---|---|
| Rats and mice |  | Small footprints in dust, droppings, holes in walls and doors, nests, gnawed goods or packaging, grease or smear marks, urine stains on food packaging |
| Flies and flying insects e.g. moths |  | Bodies of insects, live insects, webbing, nests, droning or buzzing, maggots |

| TYPE OF PEST | | SIGNS OF PESTS |
|---|---|---|
| Cockroaches |  | Eggs and egg cases, moulted 'skins', the insects themselves, droppings |
| Ants |  | Small piles of sand or soil, the insects themselves, flying ants on hot days |
| Birds |  | Feathers, droppings, nests, noise, the birds themselves |
| Beetles and weevils |  | Moving insects, particularly in dry food, small maggots |

| WHAT TO DO IF THINGS GO WRONG | HOW TO STOP THIS HAPPENING AGAIN |
|---|---|
| • If you see signs of a pest infestation, call a pest contractor immediately. Write the contact details for your pest contractor on the Contacts list in the diary.<br>• If you think any equipment, surfaces or utensils have been touched by pests, they should be washed, disinfected and dried to stop harmful bacteria from spreading.<br>• If you think food has been touched by pests in any way, throw it away. | • Make your pest checks more frequent.<br>• Maintain high standards of cleanliness and housekeeping to discourage activity.<br>• Improve staff training on recognising signs of pests and encourage them to report problems immediately.<br>• If you have persistent problems with pests, consider employing a pest contractor, if you do not have one already. |

**Write down what went wrong and what you did about it in your diary.**

## THINK TWICE!

Never let pest control bait/chemicals, including sprays, come into contact with food, packaging, equipment or surfaces, because they are likely to be poisonous to people.

## MANAGE IT

- Make sure no food or dirty plates etc. are left out at night – these are a source of food for pests.
- Make sure that checks for pests are carried out regularly.
- Put reminders of when to check for pests in your diary.
- If you have a pest contractor, keep a record of their contact details and visits in your diary, as well as any feedback or action points they recommend. Make a note of when you have carried these out.

# CLEANING

**Effective cleaning is essential to get rid of harmful bacteria, viruses and allergens to stop them spreading to food.**

## Effective cleaning is essential to get rid of harmful bacteria, viruses and allergens to stop them spreading to food.

This section tells you about handwashing, cleaning effectively, how to ‘clear and clean as you go’ and developing a cleaning schedule.

SAFE METHOD:

# HANDWASHING

**Effective handwashing is essential to help prevent bacteria spreading to food.**

Make sure all staff who work with food wash their hands properly before handling or preparing food, including after handling raw food and before handling ready-to-eat food. **Remember: effective hand washing takes time.**

*For a video demonstration, visit the **FSA YouTube channel***

## WASHING HANDS EFFECTIVELY

**Step 1:**

Wet your hands thoroughly under warm running water and squirt liquid soap onto your palm.

**Step 2:**

Rub your hands together palm to palm to make a lather.

**Step 3:**

Rub the palm of one hand along the back of the other and along the fingers. Repeat with the other hand.

**Step 4:**

Put your palms together with fingers interlocked and rub in between each of the fingers thoroughly.

**Step 5:**

Rub around your thumbs on each hand and then rub the fingertips of each hand against your palms.

**Step 6:**

Rinse off the soap with clean running water and dry your hands thoroughly on a disposable towel. Turn off the tap with the towel and then throw the towel away.

## CHECK IT

For hands to be washed properly, you need warm running water, liquid soap and preferably disposable towels.

Ideally, antibacterial soap should meet standard BS EN 1499 for extra protection against harmful bacteria and contamination.

Do you use liquid soap?

Yes [4] No [ ] If no, what do you use?

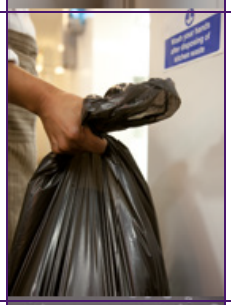
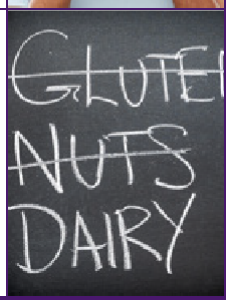
Do you use disposable towels?

Yes [4] No [ ] If no, what do you use?

Do you use antibacterial soap which meets standard BS EN 1499?

Yes [4] No [ ] If no, what do you use?

## WHEN TO WASH YOUR HANDS

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **BEFORE** touching or handling any food, especially ready-to-eat food (e.g. cooked meat) and **AFTER** touching raw meat, poultry, fish, eggs, unwashed vegetables or any packaging used for raw foods. |  | After touching a cut or changing a dressing. |  |
| When entering the kitchen e.g. after a break or going to the toilet. |  | After touching items such as phones, light switches, door handles, cash registers and money. |  |
| After touching or emptying bins. |  | After touching your hair, face or blowing your nose. |  |
| After any cleaning. |  | Before preparing food for a customer who has declared a food allergy. |  |

## THINK TWICE!

**If you use disposable gloves in your business, they should never be used as an alternative to effective handwashing.**

When using disposable gloves make sure you:

- Wash your hands thoroughly before putting them on and after taking them off.
- Always change them regularly, especially between handling raw food and ready-to-eat food.
- Throw them away after use or if damaged.

Hygienic hand rubs and gels can be useful when used as an additional precaution, but should **never** be used as a replacement for effective handwashing. If hand rubs or gels are used they should comply with standard BS EN 1500.

| WHAT TO DO IF THINGS GO WRONG | HOW TO STOP THIS HAPPENING AGAIN |
|---|---|
| • If you think a member of staff has not washed their hands, make sure they wash them straight away and emphasise how important it is to wash their hands when working with food. | • Make sure that hand basins are convenient with plenty of soap and disposable towels.<br>• Train staff again on this safe method.<br>• Improve staff supervision. |

SAFE METHOD:

# CLEANING EFFECTIVELY

**Effective cleaning is essential to get rid of harmful bacteria and stop them spreading. Cleaning is also important to discourage pest activity.**

| SAFETY POINT | WHY? | HOW DO YOU DO THIS? |
|---|---|---|
| **Cleaning and disinfection needs to be carried out in two stages:**<br>1. **Clean:** Using either hot, soapy water or a cleaning product (such as a sanitiser), remove visible dirt, grease and debris from surfaces/ equipment and wipe off or rinse.<br>2. **Disinfect:** Following the manufacturer's instructions, apply a disinfectant (such as a sanitiser) all over the surfaces/equipment and leave on for the required contact time. | Chemical disinfectants only work if surfaces have been thoroughly cleaned first to remove grease and other dirt. | Do you clean and disinfect using two stages?<br>Yes [4] No<br><br>Have your staff been trained in how to complete the two stage clean?<br>Yes [4] No |
| **Manufacturer's instructions/BS EN standards:**<br>When using disinfectants or sanitisers, always follow the manufacturer's instructions on the label. These instructions should tell you how to correctly dilute the product and how long you need to leave the product on the surface/ equipment for harmful bacteria to be reduced to safe levels. Sanitisers and disinfectants should meet relevant standards, either BS EN 1276 or BS EN 13697. | This is important to make sure that chemicals work effectively. | Where do you keep information to confirm your disinfectants or sanitisers meet BS EN 1276 or BS EN 13697 standards?<br>Check on purchase or as donated.<br>Given to SUs if not. |
| It is very important to thoroughly clean and disinfect surfaces and equipment after use for raw food, and before preparing ready-to eat foods. | This will help prevent harmful bacteria spreading from raw food on to ready-to-eat food.<br>  | |

## HIGH PRIORITY CLEANING

| SAFETY POINT | WHY? | HOW DO YOU DO THIS? |
|---|---|---|
| Regularly wash/wipe and disinfect all the items people touch frequently, such as work surfaces, sinks, taps, door handles, switches, can openers, cash registers, telephones and scales. | This will help prevent dirt and bacteria being spread to people's hands and then to food or other areas.<br>Drying naturally helps prevent bacteria being spread back to these items on a towel/cloth used for drying.<br>  | How often do you clean and disinfect items people touch frequently?<br>Work surfaces throughout the day.<br>Touchpoints - add to volunteer 'to do' list.<br>Welcome volunteers clean the Crisis areas daily.<br>Weekly office clean. |
| Clean and disinfect fridges regularly at a time when they do not contain much food. Transfer food to another fridge or a safe cold area and keep it covered. | To clean a fridge thoroughly, you should take out all the food and keep it cold somewhere else. If food is left out at room temperature, bacteria could grow.<br>  | How often do you clean and disinfect fridges?<br>Weekly deep clean of kitchen fridge on task sheet for volunteers.<br>Daily wipe of fridge in the refreshment area.<br>When restocking small fridge holding water bottles.<br>Add washing-up bowl for veg. |
| Ideally use a dishwasher. Do not overload the dishwasher and make sure it is maintained and serviced regularly.<br>If you do not have a dishwasher, wash plates, equipment, etc, in hot soapy water using bactericidal detergent.<br>Ideally, separate sinks should be used for washing up equipment used for raw foods and equipment used for ready to eat foods.<br>If you have to use the same sink, the water must be changed and the sink (including all taps/fittings) must be thoroughly cleaned and disinfected using a two stage clean between uses. | Dishwashers wash items thoroughly at a high temperature so this is a good way to clean equipment and kill bacteria (disinfect) and remove allergens. If you overload the dishwasher, it may not wash effectively.<br>Cleaning and disinfecting is important to prevent bacteria spreading from raw to ready-to-eat food.<br>  | Do you have a dishwasher?<br>Yes [4] No<br>If not, do you have separate sinks for washing up raw and ready-to-eat equipment/utensils?<br>Yes No<br>If you only have one sink, do you clean and disinfect it (including taps/ other fittings) using a two stage clean between uses?<br>Yes [4] No |

# OTHER CLEANING

| SAFETY POINT | WHY? | |
|---|---|---|
| Items that do not touch food are not as high a priority but they should still be cleaned effectively. Examples include dry storage areas and floors.<br><br>Take care when cleaning floors so other surfaces are not contaminated by splashing.<br><br>For equipment or areas that are hard to clean, you may wish to employ a contract cleaner. | This prevents dirt and bacteria building up in the kitchen. It also removes any food which has fallen on the floor, which can attract pests e.g. mice and cockroaches.<br><br>Contract cleaners have special equipment and experience of more difficult cleaning. |  |

## THINK TWICE!

Effective cleaning needs to be carried out in two stages. Disinfectants will only work on clean surfaces. Always use a cleaning product to remove visible dirt and grease before disinfecting. Always check the manufacturer's instructions for the correct dilution and contact time for disinfectants or sanitisers.

When you are cleaning, remember to move food out of the way or cover it and to change your protective clothing. This is to prevent dirt, bacteria or cleaning chemicals from getting onto food.

| MANAGE IT | WHY? | HOW DO YOU DO THIS? |
|---|---|---|
| Fill out the cleaning schedule in the diary to show how you manage cleaning in your business. (See the 'Your cleaning schedule' safe method.) | This is to make sure that staff know what to clean, when and how. | Have you completed the cleaning schedule from the diary?<br>Yes ☐ No ☐<br>If no, are you using another cleaning schedule?<br>Yes ☐ No ☐ |
| Make sure you always have a good supply of cleaning chemicals, materials and equipment. It can be helpful to put a reminder in your diary of when you should buy more. | Staff are more likely to clean properly if the right cleaning chemicals, materials and equipment are available. | Do you make sure you have a good supply of cleaning products?<br>Yes ☐ No ☐ |

| WHAT TO DO IF THINGS GO WRONG | HOW TO STOP THIS HAPPENING AGAIN |
|---|---|
| • If you find that any item in your kitchen is not properly clean, and where necessary disinfect it, and allow it to dry. | • Review your cleaning schedule, including how you clean and how often.<br>• Make sure your cleaning chemicals, materials and equipment are suitable for the tasks you use them for and are being used correctly.<br>• Train staff again on this safe method.<br>• Improve staff supervision. |

**Write down what went wrong and what you did about it in your diary.**

SAFE METHOD:

# CLEAR AND CLEAN AS YOU GO

**Keeping your kitchen clear and clean makes it safer.**

| SAFETY POINT | WHY? |
|---|---|
| It is a good idea to take off outer packaging from food before you bring food into the kitchen or storeroom.<br>Remember to check if allergen information is on the inner packaging before disposing of the outer packaging so you can provide accurate information to your customers. | Outer packaging could have touched dirty floors etc. when it has been stored or transported before.  |
| Take extra care with how you throw away packaging and food waste from raw food. If packaging from raw food touches work surfaces make sure you wash and then disinfect them afterwards. | Packaging and food waste from these foods are more likely to spread harmful bacteria and allergens to food and surfaces.  |
| Keep your kitchen free from clutter and rubbish. Clear away dirty kitchen equipment as soon as possible. | Work surfaces are easier to keep clean when they are not cluttered. It is also important to clear away used equipment to prevent bacteria and allergens spreading from it to surfaces or food.  |
| Keep sinks clear and clean them regularly. | This stops dirt building up and helps prevent bacteria and allergens from spreading. |
| Wash or wipe away spills as soon as they happen. Clean and then disinfect work surfaces after wiping up spills from raw food. | This stops dirt building up and helps prevent bacteria and allergens from spreading.  |
| Wash work surfaces thoroughly between tasks. Use a new cloth (or one that has been washed and disinfected) to clean work surfaces before preparing ready-to-eat food. | This will help prevent dirt and bacteria and allergens spreading onto other foods from the surface. A dirty cloth could spread bacteria and allergens to the surface.  |

## MANAGE IT

'Clear and clean as you go' is the recommended way of keeping your kitchen clean as you work. How do you do this?

Contaminated outer packaging boxes straight to recycling.
Packaging and waste from raw food disposed of immediately – areas cleaned and disinfected.
Food entries logged and into correct storage - times logged.
Declutter as you go.
Sinks cleared and cleaned.
Spills wiped, cleaned and disinfected.
Work surfaces cleaned between tasks.
End of day checklist.
Dirty crockery/ cutlery goes straight to dishwasher which is on daily.
Bins emptied daily or more often as needed
Floors mopped at end of day or more often as needed.

## MANAGING FOOD WASTE

Managing food waste can help prevent fat, oils and grease from blocking your sinks, pipes and drains. Check with your Environmental Health Team if there are specific requirements in your area.

| SAFETY POINT | WHY? | HOW DO YOU DO THIS? |
|---|---|---|
| Scrape food waste into the bin before washing. Ideally, use a separate a bin just for food waste. | This will help prevent food blocking pipes and drains at your business. | Do you remove left-over food from plates before washing?<br>Yes 4 No<br>Do you have a bin just for food waste?<br>Yes No 4 |
| Use a strainer over the plughole to stop food going down the sink. | This will help stop food from blocking your sinks, pipes and drains. | Do you use strainers in your sinks?<br>Yes 4 No |
| Food waste should be stored in a specific place, away from food preparation, before it is collected. This area should be cleaned and disinfected regularly. | Open lids and drainage holes on external bins can allow pest access. | Do you have a specific place for food waste?<br>Yes No 4<br>Do you clean and disinfect this area regularly?<br>Yes 4 No<br>How often is food waste collected at your business?<br>Daily to outside bins. Weekly bin collection. No longer separate at THH. |

| WHAT TO DO IF THINGS GO WRONG | HOW TO STOP THIS HAPPENING AGAIN |
|---|---|
| • If you find that work surfaces or equipment are not properly clean, wash, disinfect and dry them before using them to prepare food.<br>• If you find any packaging or waste lying around, throw it away immediately and clean and then disinfect the work surface thoroughly.<br>• If sinks, pipes or drains get blocked check food is being scraped into bins before washing and that strainers are being used. | • Review your clearing and cleaning practices.<br>• Review staffing levels.<br>• Consider changing the order/timing of tasks to make it easier to keep surfaces clear and clean.<br>• Train staff again on this safe method.<br>• Improve staff supervision. |

**Write down what went wrong and what you did about it in your diary.**

# CHILLING

**Chilling food properly helps to stop harmful bacteria from growing.**

## Chilling food properly helps to stop harmful bacteria from growing.

Some foods need to be kept chilled to keep them safe, such as sandwiches, cooked meat and fish, cooked rice and pasta, cream-based desserts, food with a 'use-by' date and food that says 'keep refrigerated' on the label.

SAFE METHOD:

# CHILLED STORAGE AND DISPLAYING CHILLED FOOD

**Harmful bacteria can grow in food that is not chilled properly.**

| SAFETY POINT | WHY? | HOW DO YOU DO THIS? | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Certain foods need to be kept chilled to keep them safe, for example:<br>• food with a 'use by' date<br>• food that says 'keep refrigerated' on the label<br>• food you have cooked and will not serve immediately<br>• ready-to-eat food such as salads, cooked meats, sandwiches and desserts. | If these types of food are not kept cold enough harmful bacteria could grow. | Do you check regularly that these types of food are kept chilled?<br>Yes 4 | If not, what do you do? |
| Make sure you use food before its 'use by' date.<br>For dishes you have prepared or cooked, use stickers, or another method of labelling, to keep track of when food should be used or thrown away.<br>For guidance on how long to keep food, follow manufacturer's storage instructions on the product label. High risk ready to eat foods should be kept for a maximum of 3 days in total (day of cook/ opening + 2) unless you have evidence that it is safe to keep them for longer. | Food with 'use by' dates, cooked dishes and other ready-to eat food have a limited shelf life. Food cannot be supplied or served after its 'use by date'. |  | How do you keep track of when food should be used or thrown away?<br>Stock check and logs in and used by.<br>Stickers/ written dates on packets.<br>Cooked food stored in fridge with a 'use by' date label. |
| Follow the manufacturer's instructions on how to use fridges and chilled display equipment. | It is important to use equipment properly to make sure food is kept cold enough. | Do you follow the manufacturer's instructions for using your:<br>Fridge? 4<br>Chilled display unit? | If not, what do you do?<br>Chilled displays NA |
| • Pre-cool the display unit before you put chilled food in it.<br>• Only display as much food as you think you will need.<br>• Display food for the shortest time possible.<br>You could also:<br>• use a 'dummy' portion for display (which will not be eaten)<br>• use photographs to show customers what the food looks like. | It is important to keep chilled food cold while it is on display to prevent harmful bacteria from growing in the food. |  | What do you do to make sure chilled food is displayed safely?<br>Chilled displays NA |

| CHECK IT | HOW DO YOU DO THIS? |
|---|---|
| It is recommended that fridges and chilled display equipment should be set at 5°C or below.<br><br>This is to make sure that chilled food is kept at 8°C or below. This is a legal requirement in England, Wales and Northern Ireland, and recommended in Scotland.<br><br>You should check the temperature of your fridges and chilled display equipment at least once a day starting with your opening checks (see the 'Management' section).<br><br>To make sure equipment is working properly, check temperatures in-between packs of chilled food using a clean, disinfected probe thermometer. | Some equipment will have a digital display or dial to show what temperature it is set at. You can use this to check the temperature of your equipment.<br><br>If you do this, you should check regularly that the temperature shown on the display/dial is accurate using either a fridge thermometer or a probe thermometer.<br><br>How do you check the temperature of chilling equipment?<br><br>**Fridge:**<br><br>Digital display [4] Dial thermometer [4] Fridge thermometer [4]<br><br>Between chilled foods using probe thermometer [ ]<br><br>**Chilled display unit:**<br><br>Digital display [ ] Dial thermometer [ ] Fridge thermometer [ ]<br><br>Between chilled foods using probe thermometer [ ]<br><br>If you do not do this, what do you do?<br><br>Fridge temps logged twice daily at opening and closing checks.<br>Chilled displays NA<br>We are to purchase an infra-red thermometer. |

## THINK TWICE!

When you display cold food (e.g. on a buffet) you should use suitable chilled display equipment to keep it at 8°C or below. If this is not possible there is a '4 hour rule' exception: **You can display food out of chilled storage for up to four hours, but you can only do this once.**

Make sure you know how long food has been on display or kept out of chilled storage. It is a good idea to label foods with the time they were taken out of the fridge or write this information in your diary so you can check the time easily. Food which has been displayed for less than four hours can be put back in the fridge and kept at 8°C or below until it is used. If it has been out for more than four hours it must be thrown away.

If you do take food out of chilled storage to display it, remove a small amount at a time. Make sure that food on display is used up before you add new food. This will make it easier to ensure that food is not left on display longer than 4 hours.

Some foods require storage at temperatures lower than 8°C to keep them safe so always follow the manufacturer's storage guidance.

Minimise the time chilled foods are kept out at room temperature during preparation. You can help do this by only preparing small batches one at a time.

## PROVE IT

To check chilling equipment is working effectively you can use a disinfected temperature probe to check the food is kept at a safe temperature. (See the 'Prove it' safe method in the Management section for advice on using probes safely).

| WHAT TO DO IF THINGS GO WRONG | HOW TO STOP THIS HAPPENING AGAIN |
|---|---|
| • If your fridge or display equipment breaks down, use other equipment, or move the food to a cold area. If you cannot do this, or you do not know how long the equipment has been broken down, contact the Environmental Health Team at your local council for advice.<br>• If food on display has not been kept chilled for more than four hours, throw it away.<br><br>Remember that some foods need extra care e.g. rice. See the safe method 'Foods that need extra care' in the Cooking section. | • Review your chilled display method and see if you can make it safer (using the front of this sheet).<br>• Train staff again on this safe method.<br>• Improve staff supervision.<br>• If you have frequent problems with your chilling equipment, consider whether it is suitable for your business. Generally, commercial equipment will be more suitable for catering. |

**Write down what went wrong and what you did about it in your diary.**

SAFE METHOD:

# DEFROSTING

**Harmful bacteria can grow in food that is not defrosted properly.**

| SAFETY POINT | WHY? | HOW DO YOU DO THIS? |
|---|---|---|
| Food should be thoroughly defrosted before cooking (unless the manufacturer's instructions tell you to cook from frozen or you have a proven safe method). | If food is still frozen or partially frozen, it will take longer to cook.<br>The outside of the food could be cooked, but the centre might not be, which means it could contain harmful bacteria. | Do you check food is thoroughly defrosted before cooking?<br>Yes 4<br>If not, what do you do? |
| **OPTIONS FOR DEFROSTING FOOD** | | |
| 1. Ideally, plan ahead to leave enough time and space to defrost small amounts of food in the fridge. | Putting food in the fridge will keep it at a safe temperature while it is defrosting. | Do you use this method? Yes 4<br>How much time do you allow for defrosting?<br>Ready meals are straight from freezer to oven.<br>Others defrosted overnight. |
| 2. If you cannot defrost food in the fridge, you could put it in a container and then place it under cold running water. | Cold water will help to speed up defrosting without allowing the outside of the food to get too warm.  | Do you use this method? Yes<br>Which foods do you defrost in this way?<br>NA |
| 3. Raw meat and poultry (including large joints and whole birds), should not be defrosted under cold running water unless they are in a sealed container. For more information visit **the FSA website**. | Harmful bacteria could be spread, contaminating sinks, taps and surfaces. | How do you defrost raw meat and poultry?<br>NA We do not have the capacity to freeze and store meat and poultry. |
| 4. If you use the sink to defrost some foods, make sure the sink is clean and empty. The sink should be cleaned and then disinfected after being used for defrosting. | Cold running water will help speed up defrosting. | Do you use this method? Yes<br>Which foods do you defrost in this way?<br>None currently |

| SAFETY POINTS | WHY? | HOW DO YOU DO THIS |
|---|---|---|
| 5. Or you could defrost food in the microwave on the 'defrost' setting. | This is a fast way to defrost food. | Do you use this method? Yes<br>Which foods do you defrost in this way?<br>None currently but the microwave has a defrost setting., |
| 6. If necessary you could defrost food at room temperature. Follow the manufacturer's defrosting instructions. Food should be left out at room temperature for the shortest time possible. Ideally, defrost these foods in the fridge. | Foods will defrost quite quickly at room temperature, but harmful bacteria could grow in food if it gets too warm while defrosting. | Do you use this method? Yes<br>Which foods do you defrost in this way?<br>None currently |
| 7. If you have another method of defrosting, write the details here: | | Which foods do you defrost in this way?<br>None currently |

## THINK TWICE!

Keep meat/poultry separate from other food when it is defrosting, to prevent cross-contamination. Once food has been defrosted you should use it immediately (within one day).

| CHECK IT | WHY? | HOW DO YOU DO THIS? |
|---|---|---|
| When you think food has defrosted, it is important to check to make sure. | The outside may look defrosted but the inside could still be frozen. | Check for ice crystals in the food using your hand or a skewer.<br>Do you use this check? Yes<br>  |
| | | With birds, check the joints are flexible.<br>Do you use this check? Yes<br>  |
| | | If you use another check, write the details here:<br>NA |

| WHAT TO DO IF THINGS GO WRONG | HOW TO STOP THIS HAPPENING AGAIN |
|---|---|
| • If food has not fully defrosted, continue to defrost the food until no ice crystals are left. Test again before cooking or reheating.<br>• Speed up the defrosting process e.g. by using cold water or a microwave (see the front of this sheet).<br>• Use an alternative menu item. If you do not have time to defrost for longer, replace the dish with a similar dish that is ready to serve. | • Change your defrosting method and make it safer, e.g. defrost smaller amounts.<br>• Make sure you allow enough time to defrost.<br>• Train staff again on this safe method.<br>• Improve staff supervision.<br>• If you defrost lots of food in your business you may wish to consider creating extra fridge space or using a special defrosting cabinet. |

**Write down what went wrong and what you did about it in your diary.**

SAFE METHOD:

# FREEZING

**It is important to take care when freezing food and handle frozen food safely.**

| SAFETY POINT | WHY? | HOW DO YOU DO THIS? |
|---|---|---|
| Put frozen food in the freezer as soon as it is delivered. | If frozen food starts to defrost, harmful bacteria could grow. | Is frozen food put in the freezer as soon as it is delivered?<br>Yes ⁴ No |
| If you are freezing fresh food, freeze it as soon as it has been delivered or prepared.<br>Freeze hot food as soon as it has been properly chilled down. | The longer you wait before freezing food, the greater the chance of harmful bacteria growing. (See the 'Chilling down hot food' method.)<br>  | Is fresh and cooked food put in the freezer as soon as it has been delivered, prepared, or chilled down?<br>Yes ⁴ No |
| Divide food into smaller portions and put it in containers or freezer bags before freezing. | Smaller portions will freeze (and defrost) more quickly.<br>The centre of larger portions takes longer to freeze, allowing harmful bacteria to grow.<br>Using containers and freezer bags prevents cross-contamination.<br>  | Is food divided into smaller portions to help it freeze better?<br>Yes ⁴ No<br>Is frozen food stored in containers or freezer bags?<br>Yes ⁴ No |

## HOW DO YOU DO THIS?

If you answered 'No' to any of the above questions, write down what you do:

## THINK TWICE!

Once the food is defrosted it's shelf life depends on the amount of days left until expiry when it was frozen down.

## PROVE IT

You can use the digital display, a dial thermometer or a probe thermometer to check your freezer is keeping food at a safe temperature. (See the 'Prove it' pages in the Management section for advice on using probes safely).

| WHAT TO DO IF THINGS GO WRONG | HOW TO STOP THIS HAPPENING AGAIN |
|---|---|
| If you find that your freezer is not working properly, you should do the following things:<br>• **Food that is still frozen** (i.e. hard and icy) should be moved to an alternative freezer straight away. If there is no alternative freezer, defrost food using the 'Defrosting' safe method.<br>• **Food that has begun to defrost** (i.e. starting to get soft and/or with liquid coming out of it) should be moved to a suitable place to continue defrosting using the 'Defrosting' safe method.<br>• **Fully defrosted food** (i.e. soft and warm) should be cooked, if appropriate (e.g. raw meat and poultry), until it is piping hot all the way through. After cooking, use the food immediately or chill or freeze it safely straight away. If this is not possible, throw it away.<br>• **Food that has to be kept frozen** (e.g. ice cream) cannot be re-frozen once it has started to defrost. You will have to use it immediately or throw it away.<br>Remember, some foods need extra care. See the 'Foods that need extra care' safe method in the Cooking section. | • Get your freezer mended or buy a new one.<br>• Have freezers serviced regularly and check that they are working properly as part of your opening checks.<br>• Re-organise freezers so there is more space and they are kept closed as much as possible.<br>• Train staff again on this safe method.<br>• Increase staff supervision. |

**Write down what went wrong and what you did about it in your diary.**

# COOKING

**It is essential to cook food properly to kill any harmful bacteria. If it is not cooked properly, it might not be safe for your customers to eat.**

## It is essential to cook food properly to kill any harmful bacteria. If it is not cooked properly, it might not be safe for your customers to eat.

It is also very important to handle ready-to-eat food carefully to protect it from harmful bacteria. This is because it will not be cooked or reheated before serving.

Do not forget that cooking does not remove allergens from food, so you need to handle food that contains allergens carefully.

This section includes information on cooking safely, foods that need extra care, reheating, hot holding and ready-to-eat food.

SAFE METHOD:

# COOKING SAFELY

**Thorough cooking kills harmful bacteria.**

| SAFETY POINT | WHY? |
|---|---|
| Where appropriate, follow the manufacturer's cooking instructions for food products. | The manufacturer has tried and tested safe cooking methods specifically for its products. |
| Preheat equipment such as ovens and grills before cooking. | If you use equipment before it has preheated, food will take longer to cook. This means that recommended cooking times in recipes or manufacturer's instructions might not be long enough. |
| Do not let raw food touch or drip onto cooked food e.g. when adding food to the grill/barbecue. Never use the same utensils, plates or containers for raw and cooked or ready-to-eat food.<br>It is a good idea to fully cook poultry in an oven first, then finish it on the barbecue.<br>If you are using left over marinade as a sauce, make sure it is cooked until steaming hot. | Raw food can carry harmful bacteria, which could spread onto cooked food and stop it being safe.<br>This will make sure that the poultry is cooked thoroughly. Juices should be clear, with no pink or red in them.<br>Marinades can carry bacteria from the raw meat or poultry, if not cooked thoroughly. |
| If you serve beef or lamb rare (whole cuts such as steaks and whole joints only), make sure all of the outside surfaces are fully cooked, e.g. by sealing in a pan.<br>  | This will kill harmful bacteria on the outside of the meat. Pork and rolled joints should not be served rare. |
| Liver and offal, including dishes such as liver pate or parfait, must be cooked to a safe temperature in the centre of the meat (see 'Prove it').<br>  | Harmful bacteria can be found in the centre of liver as well as the outside. |
| Turn meat and poultry during cooking.<br>  | This helps it cook more evenly and thoroughly. |
| Make sure liquid dishes, e.g. gravy, soups, sauces and stews, are simmering and stir them frequently.<br>  | This is to make sure the food is hot enough to kill bacteria. Stirring will help make sure the food is the same temperature all the way through. |

## CHECK IT – USE THESE CHECKS TO TELL IF FOOD IS PROPERLY COOKED.

Check whole birds are cooked to a safe temperature in the thickest part of the leg (see 'Prove it'). The meat should not be pink or red and the juices should be clear.

The largest piece of meat in stews, curries etc. should be cooked to a safe temperature in the centre with no pink or red (see 'Prove it').

Check whole cuts of pork and processed meat products, such as sausages and burgers, are cooked to a safe temperature in the centre with no pink or red (see 'Prove it').

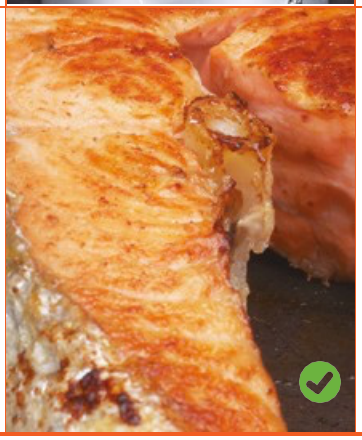
Check combination dishes (e.g. contains meat and vegetables) are cooked to a safe temperature in the centre (see 'Prove it'). If you are cooking a large dish or batch, check in several places.

Stir liquid dishes regularly and check they bubble rapidly and are heated to a safe temperature in several places before serving (see 'Prove it').

Check that all the outside surfaces of whole cuts of meat and whole joints (beef or lamb) are fully cooked.

Check fish is cooked to a safe temperature in the centre and the colour and texture has changed (see 'Prove it').

Some fish (e.g. tuna) may be served 'rare' as long as they have been correctly frozen beforehand to kill any parasites which may be present and are fully seared on the outside to kill any harmful bacteria that may be present. Further guidance is available at the FSA website



Check pork joints or rolled meat joints are cooked to a safe temperature in the centre (see 'Prove it'). The juices should not have any pink or red in them.

## PROVE IT

Use a disinfected temperature probe to check dishes are properly cooked or reheated.

**Examples of safe time/temperature combinations for cooking include:**

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 80°C for at least 6 seconds | 70°C for at least 2 minutes | 60°C for at least 45 minutes |
| 75°C for at least 30 seconds | 65°C for at least 10 minutes | |

(See the 'Prove it' safe method in the Management section for advice on using probes safely).

## WHAT TO DO IF THINGS GO WRONG

- Cook the food for longer.
- Speed up the cooking process, for example by dividing the food into smaller quantities, or using different equipment.

## HOW TO STOP THIS HAPPENING AGAIN

- Review your cooking method. You might need to increase the time or temperature, or use different equipment.
- Train staff again on this safe method.
- Improve staff supervision.
- Repair or replace equipment.

**Write down what went wrong and what you did about it in your diary.**

SAFE METHOD:

# FOODS THAT NEED EXTRA CARE

**Some foods need to be treated with extra care to make sure they are safe to eat.**

Remember that raw food is often the main source of bacteria in the kitchen. Follow the advice in the 'Cooking safely' safe method on how to cook these foods. You should also take care with the following foods.

| SAFETY POINT | WHY? | HOW DO YOU DO THIS? |
|---|---|---|
| **Eggs**<br>Cook eggs and foods containing eggs thoroughly until they are steaming hot or, if serving eggs or egg dishes lightly cooked (e.g. soft boiled or in fresh mayonnaise or mousse), either use:<br>• Pasteurised egg, or<br>• British Lion code or equivalent assurance scheme | Eggs can contain harmful bacteria. If you cook them thoroughly this kills any bacteria.<br>The British Lion code or equivalent assurance schemes demonstrates eggs have been produced in a safe manner and therefore can be eaten less than thoroughly cooked. Pasteurisation also kills harmful bacteria. | List the dishes containing eggs that you prepare or cook.<br>Scrambled, omelet.<br>Do you cook eggs and food containing eggs thoroughly until they are steaming hot?<br>Yes 4 If not, what do you do? |
| Make sure you rotate stock and use the oldest eggs first. Use eggs within the 'best before' date. You can freeze them for use later if required.<br>Buy eggs from a reputable supplier.<br>Store eggs in a cool, dry place. | Harmful bacteria can grow in eggs that are not handled or stored correctly<br>  | |
| **Rice**<br>When you have cooked rice, make sure you keep it hot until serving or chill it down as quickly as possible and then keep it in the fridge.<br>You can make rice chill down more quickly by dividing it into smaller portions, spreading it out on a clean tray, or running it under cold water (make sure the water is clean and drinking quality). | Rice can contain spores of a type of harmful bacteria that may not be killed by cooking or reheating.<br>If cooked rice is left at room temperature, spores can multiply and produce toxins that cause food poisoning. Reheating will not get rid of these | How do you keep rice hot before serving?<br>Remains on hob and used within 30mins and never reheated.<br>If you chill down rice how do you do this? |
| **Pulses**<br>Follow the instructions on the packaging on how to soak and cook dried pulses, such as beans.<br>  | Pulses can contain natural toxins that could make people ill unless they are destroyed by the proper method of soaking and cooking.<br>Tinned pulses will have been soaked and cooked already. | Do you follow the manufacturer's instructions when cooking pulses?<br>Yes 4<br>If not, what do you do?<br>Generally tinned. |
| **Shellfish (molluscs and crustaceans)**<br>Make sure you buy shellfish from a reputable supplier. Keep the product label for 60 days, after opening. | If you do not use a reputable supplier, you cannot be confident that shellfish have been caught and handled safely.<br>It is a legal requirement to keep labels for 60 days to trace suppliers, if needed. | |

| SAFETY POINT | WHY? | HOW DO YOU DO THIS? |
|---|---|---|
| Crabs, crayfish, lobster and scallops should be prepared by someone with specialist knowledge. | Some parts of these shellfish cannot be eaten and some are poisonous, so it is important to know how to remove these parts safely. | If you prepare crabs, crayfish, lobster and scallops, are these prepared by someone with specialist knowledge?<br>Yes<br>If not, what do you do?<br>NA for most homeless people. |
| Crustaceans and molluscs such as prawns and scallops will change in colour and texture when they are cooked.<br>For example, prawns turn from blue-grey to pink and scallops become milky white and firm.<br>Langoustines (also called scampi or Dublin Bay prawns) are pink when raw and the flesh becomes firm and pink-white when they are cooked.<br>Always follow the manufacturer's instructions for preparation and storage. | | List the types of shellfish you serve or use as an ingredient.<br>NA |
| Before cooking mussels and clams, throw away any with open or damaged shells. | If the shell is damaged or open before cooking, the shellfish might not be safe to eat. | |
| To check that a mussel or clam is cooked, make sure the shell is open and that the mussel or clam has shrunk inside the shell. If the shell has not opened during cooking, throw it away. | | |
| **Fish:** Make sure you buy fish from a reputable supplier.<br>If you buy fresh fish make sure you store it between 0°C and 4°C. If you buy frozen fish then keep it frozen until you are ready to use it. | Certain types of fish, such as mackerel, tuna, anchovies and herrings, can cause food poisoning if not kept at the correct temperature. | |

**Other foods that need extra care:**
Some businesses produce certain foods or use certain processes other than those included in this pack (some examples are provided below). If this is the case for your business, you must be able to demonstrate that you do these safely. Contact your the Environmental Health Team at your local council for additional guidance.

**Example processes include:** Vacuum packing, sous vide, low temperature cooking, fermenting, smoking or curing meat/fish

**Example foods include:** Kebabs, sushi/sashimi, liver parfait, fish/meat carpaccio and tartare, less than thoroughly cooked burgers

SAFE METHOD:

# REHEATING

**It is very important to reheat food properly to kill harmful bacteria that may have grown since the food was cooked.**

| SAFETY POINT | WHY? |
|---|---|
| Make sure you use equipment that reheats/cooks food effectively and follow the equipment manufacturer's instructions. | If equipment is not suitable for reheating, or is not used properly, the food might not get hot enough to kill bacteria.<br>   |
| Preheat equipment such as ovens and grills before reheating. | Food will take longer to reheat if you use equipment before it has preheated. This means that recommended reheating times in recipes or manufacturer's instructions might not be long enough. |
| If you are reheating food in a microwave, follow the product manufacturer's instructions, including advice on standing and stirring.<br>If you use a microwave to reheat food that you have cooked yourself, it is a good idea to stir it at stages while reheating. | The manufacturer has tested its instructions to make sure that products will be properly reheated. Standing and stirring are part of the process of cooking/ reheating in a microwave and help make sure the food is the same temperature all the way through.<br><br>When food is microwaved, it can be very hot at the edges and still be cold in the centre – stirring helps to prevent this. |
| Serve reheated food immediately, unless it is going straight into hot holding. | If food is not served immediately, the temperature will drop and harmful bacteria could grow.<br>  |

## THINK TWICE!

Remember, reheating means cooking again, not just warming up. Always reheat food thoroughly until it reaches a safe temperature in the centre (see 'Prove It' in 'Cooking Safely'). You should only reheat once. Do not put food into hot holding without reheating it properly first.

## CHECK IT

Check dishes reach a safe temperature in the centre (see 'Prove it' in 'Cooking Safely'). When checking microwaved foods, test in a number of different areas in case of cold spots.

| YOUR CHECK | TYPES OF DISH |
|---|---|
| If you use a different check, you will need to prove that it is safe. See the 'Prove it' safe method in the Management section. Give details of your check here: | Temp probe |
| | All ready meals and freshly cooked or slow cooked meals. |

## WHAT TO DO IF THINGS GO WRONG

- If the equipment seems to be working, reheat the dish for longer and then test it again.
- Speed up the reheating process by using smaller portions.

## HOW TO STOP THIS HAPPENING AGAIN

- Check your equipment is working correctly.
- Review your reheating method – you may need to increase the time and/or temperature, use different equipment or change the size of portions.
- Train staff again on this safe method.
- Improve staff supervision.

**Write down what went wrong and what you did about it in your diary.**

SAFE METHOD:

# ACRYLAMIDE

**It is important not to over-cook certain foods**

## WHAT IS ACRYLAMIDE?

Acrylamide is a chemical that is formed naturally when some foods are cooked at high temperatures (above 120$^0$C) such as by frying, roasting, baking, grilling and toasting.

Legislation is in place to reduce acrylamide levels in food, as it has the potential to cause cancer in humans.

## WHAT FOODS?

If you cook the following types of foods, you should put in place practical steps to reduce acrylamide.

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Raw potato products** such as chips, French fries, other cut (deep-fried) and sliced potato crisps made from fresh potatoes, including potatoes that are deep fried and finished in the oven. | **Bread products** such as loaves, bread rolls and baguettes, toast and toasted sandwiches. | **Sweet bakery products** such as cookies, biscuits, scones, gingerbread, wafers, crumpets. | **Savoury bakery products** such as crackers, crisp bread, breadsticks. |

| SAFETY POINT | WHY? | TICK IF YOU DO THIS |
|---|---|---|
| **Purchasing, receipt and storage** | | |
|  When buying raw potatoes ask your supplier for advice on the best variety to use for the type of cooking you are doing. | Certain potato varieties are lower in natural sugars and using these will help to keep acrylamide levels lower. | ☐ |
| Store raw, unpeeled potatoes that are going to be fried, baked or roasted in a cool, dark place, above 6$^0$C. Do not store in the fridge. | Potatoes stored in the fridge can form more sugars, which can mean higher levels of acrylamide when the food is cooked. | ☐ |
| When buying cooked products from a supplier tell them you will not accept over-baked or burnt products. | Check deliveries and reject products that are over-baked or burnt as these will have higher levels of acrylamide. | ☐ |
| Ask your cooking oil supplier for advice on the best oil to use for the type of cooking you are doing. | Cooking foods in the right oil for the type of cooking will help foods to fry quicker and keep acrylamide levels lower. | ☐ |
| **Preparation** | | |
| Cut foods, such as potatoes, to similar sizes. | This will help all foods to cook more evenly. | ☐ |
| Where possible, when making home-made chips, or cut potatoes that are going to be deep-fried, follow **one** of these steps: | | |
| Soak (for 30-180 mins) in cold water after cutting. Rinse with clean water and drain. | These steps will remove excess sugars and help to keep acrylamide levels lower.  | ☐ |
| **Or** - Soak for a few minutes in warm water. Rinse with clean water and drain. | | ☐ |
| **Or** - blanch potatoes before cooking. | | ☐ |
| Where possible, and when the preparation process allows, when making bread or dough products follow this step: | | |
| Extend the yeast fermentation time. | This will help to keep acrylamide levels lower in the finished product. | ☐ |

| SAFETY POINT | WHY? | TICK IF YOU DO THIS |
|---|---|---|
| **Cooking** | | |
| Cook foods to a golden yellow, or lighter colour | | |
| Where appropriate, follow the manufacturer's cooking instructions for food products. | The manufacturer has tried and tested cooking methods specifically for its products. | ☐ |
| Deep-fry potato products, such as chips and French fries to a golden yellow, or lighter colour. The oil temperature for cooking should ideally be below 175$^0$C. | Cooking to a golden yellow, or lighter colour, and deep-frying at lower temperatures will keep acrylamide levels low. | ☐ |
| When deep-frying take care not to over-fill baskets. Fill the basket only half way.  | This will help the foods to cook more evenly. | ☐ |
| Keep cooking oil quality at its best by skimming often to remove crumbs and food particles left in the oil. | This will prevent crumbs and food particles left in the oil from burning and will keep the oil quality for longer. | ☐ |
| Filter, change oils and clean cooking equipment as often as needed or as recommended by suppliers. | Reusing old, dirty oil and cooking equipment will increase the levels of acrylamide in deep-fried foods. | ☐ |
| When baking bread and sweet or savoury bakery products cook to a golden yellow, or lighter colour. Use the lowest oven temperature possible for the food. | Baking foods to a golden yellow, or lighter colour, and at lower oven temperatures will reduce acrylamide levels. | ☐ |
| When cooking foods such as toast and toasted sandwiches do not over-toast or burn. | Cooking bread to a golden colour, or lighter, will help to keep acrylamide levels lower. | ☐ |
|  Where possible, set a timer to mark the cooking time. This could be on the oven or fryer or you can use a separate timer. | This will remind you to remove foods at the right time to prevent foods from becoming over-cooked or burnt. | ☐ |

## THINK TWICE!

Over-cooking or burning certain foods means that these foods can be higher in acrylamide.

### Colour charts

Some suppliers have produced colour charts to show what colour is the best for certain foods to keep acrylamide levels low. You can ask if your supplier has these available. You do not have to use colour charts, but they can be useful for training your staff. **Colour charts for fries can be found at: http://goodfries.eu/en/**

| WHAT TO DO IF THINGS GO WRONG | HOW TO STOP THIS HAPPENING AGAIN |
|---|---|
| • Dispose of foods that are over-cooked or burnt. | • Review your cooking method.<br>• You might need to lower the cooking temperature or use different equipment.<br>• Train staff again on this safe method.<br>• Improve staff supervision.<br>• Repair or replace equipment that is broken or not working. |

**Write down what went wrong and what you did about it in your diary.**

SAFE METHOD:

# READY-TO-EAT FOOD

**It is important to handle ready-to-eat food safely to protect it from harmful bacteria and allergens.**

Ready-to-eat food is food that will not be cooked or reheated before serving. This includes salads, cooked meats, smoked fish, desserts, sandwiches, cheese and food that you have cooked in advance to serve cold.

| SAFETY POINT | WHY? | HOW DO YOU DO THIS? |
|---|---|---|
| When preparing and handling food, you should:<br>• keep ready-to-eat food completely separate from raw meat, poultry, fish, eggs and unwashed vegetables<br>• make sure work surfaces, chopping boards, knives etc. are clean (and disinfected if you have prepared raw food)<br>• ideally, use separate colour coded chopping boards and utensils for ready-to-eat food<br>• keep ready-to-eat food covered at all times during preparation and storage. | This protects food from harmful bacteria and allergens. This is especially important for ready-to-eat food because it will not be cooked or reheated before serving.<br><br>It also helps keep allergens from spreading.<br>  | List the types of ready-to-eat food you use and how you handle them:<br>Cheese<br>Cold sliced meat<br>Tinned fish - Tinned products transferred to plastic containers<br>Salad<br><br>Stored in containers in the fridge<br><br>Colour coded chopping boards with guidance poster. |
| Follow the manufacturer's instructions on how to store and prepare the food, if these are available. | The manufacturer's instructions are designed to keep the food safe. | Are you confident that you do this for all ready-to-eat food where instructions are available?<br>Yes 4 |
| When preparing fruit, vegetables and salad ingredients:<br>• peel, trim, or remove the outer parts, as appropriate<br>• wash them thoroughly by rubbing vigorously in a bowl of clean water<br>• wash the cleanest ones first<br>Wash your hands before and after handling fruit and vegetables.<br>If you have prepared vegetables that have dirt or soil on the outside, clean and then disinfect chopping boards and work surfaces before preparing other food. | The dirt on vegetables and salad ingredients can contain harmful bacteria. Peeling and washing helps to remove the dirt and bacteria.<br>  <br>  <br>  | Do you do this? Yes 4<br>If not, what do you do? |

| SAFETY POINT | WHY? | HOW DO YOU DO THIS? |
|---|---|---|
| Make sure you keep ready-to-eat food cold enough. See 'Chilled storage and displaying chilled food' in the Chilling section.<br><br>Do not use ready-to-eat food after the 'use by' date, if there is one.<br><br>For food you have prepared, or removed from its original packaging, use stickers or another method to keep track of when food should be used by or thrown away.<br><br>For guidance on how long to keep food once prepared or opened, follow manufacturer's storage instructions on the original product label. High risk ready-to-eat foods should be kept for a maximum of 3 days in total (day of cook/opening + 2) unless you have evidence that it is safe to keep them for longer. Cooked rice should only be kept for 1 day once prepared. | If these types of food are not kept cold enough, harmful bacteria could grow.<br><br>You should never use food that has passed its 'use by' date because it might not be safe to eat. | Do you do this? Yes<br><br>If not, what do you do? |
| If you slice cooked meat:<br>• follow the manufacturer's instructions when you clean the slicer<br>• avoid handling the meat as much as possible – use clean tongs or slice meat straight onto a plate | Meat slicers need careful cleaning and disinfecting to prevent dirt building up and to stop harmful bacteria growing, in particular on the slicing blade.<br><br>Hands can easily spread harmful bacteria onto food. | Are staff trained how to clean the meat slicer properly, or supervised?<br>Yes No |

| WHAT TO DO IF THINGS GO WRONG | HOW TO STOP THIS HAPPENING AGAIN |
|---|---|
| • If you think that a food delivery has not been handled safely, reject the delivery.<br>• If ready-to-eat vegetables, fruit or salad ingredients have not been washed properly, wash them following the advice on the first side of this Safe method and clean any work surfaces etc. they have touched.<br>• If ready-to-eat food has been prepared on a work surface or with a knife that has been used for raw meat, poultry, fish, eggs or unwashed fruit and vegetables, throw the food away.<br>• If ready-to-eat food has not been chilled safely, throw the food away.<br>• If ready-to-eat food is past it's use-by date, throw it away. | • If you do not think a supplier handles food safely, consider changing to a new supplier.<br>• Review the way you receive deliveries.<br>• Review the way you store and prepare ready-to-eat food.<br>• Train staff again on this safe method.<br>• Improve staff supervision. |

## THINK TWICE!

You should not use the same equipment, such as vacuum packing machines, slicers and mincers, for both raw and ready-to-eat food. These are complex pieces of machinery with lots of moving parts and it is very difficult to clean them sufficiently, so bacteria from raw food could easily be transferred to ready-to-eat food.

If you are preparing both raw and ready-to-eat food, you should make sure where possible this is done in separate clean and disinfected areas. If this is not possible, surface and utensils used must be thoroughly cleaned and then disinfected between tasks.

Make sure staff wash their hands thoroughly between tasks, especially when working with raw and ready-to-eat food. This stops bacteria and allergens being spread onto foods, surfaces and equipment.

**Write down what went wrong and what you did about it in your diary.**