

## NOTICE TO ALL GUESTS USING COOKING AND CLEANING FACILITIES

When cooking meals for your group, please remember to handle your food safely.

### 1. Washing hands

Wash hands thoroughly with hot soapy water, for a minimum of 20 seconds. Remember to lather up to the elbow. Pay special attention to nails and fingertips, one of the easiest and most crucial steps in food safety. Rings and bracelets can harbor germs, so either remove them or wash them carefully. It is important to wash hands in the following situations:

- Before the start of food preparation
- Between handling different food items, such as raw meat, poultry, or fish and vegetables. (Don't forget to wipe off the faucet!)
- After using the bathroom or changing a diaper.
- After touching a pet.
- After tending to a sick person, blowing your nose, sneezing, or coughing.
- After handling garbage.
- After touching your face or hair.

### 2. Preventing cross-contamination

Bacteria from raw meats that is spread to other foods, utensils, or surfaces is called "cross-contamination". Mixing raw meats with ready to eat foods is the primary source of cross-contamination. This important and multi-faceted category includes the following components:

#### *Raw meats, poultry, and fish*

- Always separate raw meats away from produce and ready to eat foods.
- At the store, have the cashier bag raw meats separately.
- At home, always store raw meats on the bottom shelf of the refrigerator, so meat juices won't drip on other foods.

#### *Kitchen counters*

- Wash well with hot soapy water and then use a disinfectant.
- Do not let pets walk on work surfaces and don't sit on work surfaces.
- Whenever you have finished working with one food, clean the counters well before introducing a new food.

#### *Cutting boards*

- It is a good idea to have separate cutting boards, one for meat, fish, poultry, and one for foods that will be served raw.
- Plastic cutting boards should be sanitized with a bleach solution or by washing in the dishwasher. To make a bleach solution, mix 1 tablespoon of bleach with one quart of cool water. Discard solution daily.
- Sanitize wooden cutting boards by rubbing with distilled grain vinegar, then air-dry or microwave for ten minutes.
- Cutting boards, especially wooden ones, should be regularly inspected to ensure that food is not getting imbedded in cracks or crevices.
- Throw out cutting boards when they get excessively worn or hard-to-clean cracks appear.
- Wash cutting boards with hot soapy water after each use.

#### *Kitchen dishcloths, sponges and aprons*

- Repeatedly using the same cloth or sponge to wipe counters spreads germs. Remember to wash towels in the washing machine daily and put sponges in the dishwasher.
- Avoid wiping your hands on your apron, as you will pick up bacteria from the last time you wiped your hands.
- When hand washing dishes, allow them to air-dry. Don't use towels to dry them, as this will spread germs.

### *Utensils and serving pieces for cooked and raw food*

- If you take raw meat, poultry, or fish to the outdoor grill, also bring a new container to put food in after it is cooked.
- Wash or replace cutlery and utensils that were used while product was raw.
- If your meat, poultry or seafood was in a marinade, bring marinade to a boil for at least 3 minutes before using as a sauce. However, it's usually better to discard marinade altogether.

### *Uncooked foods*

- Wash lettuce well, even pre-washed produce, by soaking in a bowl of cool, fresh, drinkable water.
- Clean berries and other fruits with running water; the friction of the water will brush off bacteria.
- Wash melons and other large fruits and vegetables that are not going to be cooked. Remember they came from a farm, grew on dirt, and have been handled by numerous people. If you cut an unwashed melon, bacteria from the surface will be pushed inside by the knife.
- To prevent cross-contamination, always wash foods in a bowl, not in a water-filled sink.
- If you wash raw chicken, meat, or fish, be sure to wash out the sink well to prevent cross-contamination.
- When using a food thermometer, always wash it between probes.
- Frequent hand washing is crucial in preventing cross contamination

## **5. Temperature**

Bacteria grows rapidly between the temperatures of 40 and 140 degrees Fahrenheit. This temperature range is known as the "Danger Zone". To properly store, hold, and cook foods, it is imperative to minimize the amount of time foods are at these temperatures. Pathogenic bacteria thrive in the Danger Zone; certain strains can double in number every 20 minutes. These are the bacteria that cause foodborne illnesses, but do not affect taste, smell, or appearance of the food.

- Any foods that have been in this temperature range for two hours or more should be discarded; they might taste all right, but can make you very sick.
- Don't marinate food at room temperature for longer than 1 hour.

## **6. Refrigeration**

Your refrigerator is one of the most important items in your kitchen for keeping foods safe.

- Always refrigerate perishable items immediately to minimize reproduction of pathogenic bacteria. Refrigeration will not, however, completely protect foods from spoilage bacteria. This family of bacteria can multiply at low temperatures, and diminish the quality of foods, contributing to off-flavors and aromas.
- It is important to maintain the temperature of your refrigerator below 40 degrees F. Ideal refrigerator temperature is between 36 and 38 degrees F.
- Frequently check the temperature with an appliance thermometer. If your refrigerator exceeds 40 degrees F for over two hours, dispose of all perishable foods.
- When refrigerating cooked foods, divide food into smaller portions so they will chill faster.
- It is also important not to overfill your refrigerator, as cold air circulation is necessary to keep foods chilled.
- The door areas of the refrigerator have frequent temperature fluctuations from opening and closing, so don't store perishable foods on the door. Keep eggs in the carton inside the refrigerator instead of the egg rack, and don't store milk in the door racks.
- If food spills in your refrigerator, wipe up the spill immediately and sanitize if necessary.
- Do weekly checks to assure that food is not spoiling, and occasionally wash all surfaces with warm, soapy water. To keep odors from forming, leave opened box of baking soda on a shelf and change every few months.

## 7. Thawing frozen foods

There are three safe ways to thaw frozen food: in the refrigerator, in cold water, and in the microwave. Leaving food on a counter or thawing in hot water will cause food to be in the Danger Zone.

- Refrigerator thawing can take a long time, but it is the safest method. Plan ahead, as large food items, such as a turkey, may take 24 hours for every 5 pounds. For smaller items, such as chicken breasts, put in the refrigerator in the morning for dinner that evening. Foods that are thawed in the refrigerator can be refrozen safely, with some loss in aesthetic quality.
- Cold-water thawing is faster, but can be more complicated. Meat should be wrapped in a leak-proof bag or else it will absorb the water. Keep water cold by changing it every 30 minutes. A bag of chicken breasts that weighs under a pound will defrost in less than an hour, and a large turkey takes 2 to 3 hours for every 5 pounds. Foods thawed in cold water must be cooked before refreezing.
- If food is thawed with a microwave, it must be cooked immediately following the thawing. During this process, some of the surface areas might start cooking and are in the danger zone. For this reason, we don't recommend microwave defrosting. Foods thawed in the microwave must be cooked before refreezing.

## 8. Dish Washing Procedures

When hand washing dishes always use the hottest water that you can comfortably work in without scalding yourself and use an appropriate amount of antibacterial dish soap. Rinse with hot water and air dry (DO NOT TOWEL DRY) this can spread germs. Always use clean sponges or dishcloths and rinse and sanitize them often. When using a mechanical dishwasher the wash water should be a minimum of 160 degrees combined with an appropriate detergent and rinse with water that is a minimum of 180 degrees combined with an appropriate rinsing agent.

### Food Safety Temperatures

DESCRIPTION	DEGREES FAHRENHEIT
<b>Ground Meat &amp; Meat Mixtures</b>	
Turkey, chicken	165° F
Veal, beef, lamb, pork	160° F
<b>Fresh Beef</b>	
Medium Rare	145° F
Medium	160° F
Well Done	170° F
<b>Fresh Pork</b>	
Well Done	170° F
<b>Poultry</b>	
Chicken, Whole	180° F
Turkey, Whole	180° F
Poultry Breasts, Roasted	170° F
Poultry Thighs, Wings	180° F
<b>Seafood</b>	
Fin fish	Cook until opaque and flakes easily with a fork
Shrimp, lobster, crab	Shell should turn red; flesh should become pearly opaque
Scallops	Flesh should turn milky white or opaque and be firm to touch
Clams, mussels, oysters	Cook until shells open; discard any unopened