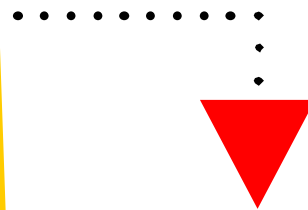


Chemung County  
Health Department's



# Food Service Guide



**To Some Critical Food  
Handling Issues**

Prepared by: Environmental Health Services, April 2001

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## INTRODUCTION

Food safety is very important. Each year in the United States millions of people become sick and approximately 9000 people die from eating contaminated food. Please review this guide so that you can learn how to keep your food safe.

Any food can become contaminated. Some foods are contaminated by unclean hands or utensils, or by chemicals. Other foods can be contaminated by micro-organisms. Foods that allow the growth of micro-organisms are called **potentially hazardous foods (PHF)**. PHF includes eggs, meat, poultry, fish, casseroles, soups, stews, gravies, cooked rice, cooked potatoes, and dairy products.

Some less commonly known PHF include raw seed sprouts, heat treated food of plant origin (such as vegetables and pasta), cut melons, and garlic-in-oil mixtures that are not modified to prevent growth of infectious or toxigenic micro-organisms.

## “DANGER ZONE”

45°F to 140°F is the range in which micro-organisms (such as bacteria) grow best. Do not allow PHF to be in this temperature range.

Have a **probe thermometer**: bi-metallic stemmed (0°F to 220°F) **or** thermocouple and use it to evaluate food temperatures.

## COLD HOLDING

Do not hold PHF at temperatures above 45°F. Check the temperature of your refrigerator. Every refrigerator with PHF must have a thermometer. The refrigerator must keep the food 45°F or lower.

## COOKING

**Cook foods thoroughly.** Refer to the table below for cooking requirements:

| FOOD TEMPERATURE REQUIREMENTS                                       |                                |
|---|--------------------------------|
| FOOD  | MINIMUM INTERNAL COOKING TEMP. |
| Rare roast beef and beef steak                                      | 130°F                          |
| Shell eggs and egg containing foods                                 | 145°F                          |
| Pork  | 150°F                          |
| Ground Meat   | 158°F                          |
| Poultry, poultry stuffing, stuffed meats & stuffing containing meat | 165°F                          |
| Other potentially hazardous foods not listed above                  | 140°F                          |

## HOT HOLDING

Keep PHF at or above 140°F. Check temperatures of food stored in steam tables and hot holding equipment frequently - at least every 2 hours.

## HANDWASHING AND FOOD HANDLING

Food workers must wash their hands after using the bathroom, eating, drinking, coughing, sneezing, smoking, touching raw meat, or otherwise contaminating the hands. **Do not contaminate food with unclean hands.**

Also, food workers must not touch ready-to-eat food with their bare hands. Examples of ready-to-eat foods are:

- Fresh fruits and vegetables served raw
- Salads and salad ingredients
- Sandwiches
- Toast, rolls, or baked goods
- Garnishes such as lettuce or lemon wedges
- Ice served to the customer
- Any food that will not be thoroughly cooked or reheated after it is prepared

Tongs, napkins, waxed paper, disposable gloves, deli paper, forks, or spoons can be used to prepare or serve food without bare hand contact.

If using gloves, food workers must change them after they become contaminated. Gloves can become contaminated in many ways, for example by touching raw meat or by being worn during cleaning. A food worker should **never** wear gloves into the restroom.

## CROSS CONTAMINATION

**Do not transfer microorganisms from one area, food, dirty hands, etc. to another.**

Raw meat, poultry, fish, and eggs should not be stored above ready-to-eat food. Store these foods at the bottom of the refrigerator and in such a way as to not contaminate ready-to-eat food.

Remember to wash hands after handling raw food, after cleaning and anytime you contaminate them.

Clean and sanitize all utensils, especially knives and cutting boards, after use with raw meat or poultry if changing to another food.

## CANNED GOODS

Do not use unsafe canned goods. Cans should be labeled and in good condition. The seams of the can should be intact and there should be no dents, rust, leaking, pitting, or swelling.

Use of "home canned" products is prohibited.

## COLD SALADS

**Do not assemble salads, such as potato salad, with warm ingredients.**

When preparing cold dishes such as potato, macaroni, egg, tuna, or poultry salads, always use pre-chilled ingredients.

## **TOXIC CHEMICALS**

**Be careful not to contaminate food with chemicals.**

Store toxic chemicals, such as cleaning supplies, in their original containers or in sturdy, clearly-labeled containers.

**Never** store chemicals in food containers or use chemical containers to store food.

**Never** allow chemicals to touch or get into food. Store chemicals and sanitizing solutions in a separate space away from food, dishes, food preparation areas, etc.

## **THAWING**

**Do not thaw food on the counter at room temperature.**

Thaw frozen foods in the refrigerator, in the microwave, or under cold running water.

Whole frozen poultry or poultry breasts must be completely thawed prior to cooking (except for a single portion for individual order).

## **COOLING**

**Do not cool PHF by unapproved methods.**

During cooling procedures, the product temperature must be reduced from 120°F to 70°F within 2 hours and then to 45°F within 4 hours (6 hours total).

Approved cooling methods:

- Ice water bath with periodic stirring of food.
- Transfer hot food to shallow (2-4") uncovered pans and cool in commercial refrigeration
- Cut solid cuts of meat into portions of 6 pounds or less during cooling
- Add ice as an ingredient after cooking.
- Use of cooling paddles.

## **REHEATING**

**Do not partially or slowly reheat PHF.**

PHF previously cooked at your establishment must be completely reheated to **165°F** or above within a 2 hour period and then held at 140°F until served.

Commercially precooked PHF (such as hot dogs) must be reheated to 140°F within two hours then held at 140°F until served.

## SICK WORKERS

**Do not work as a food handler if you are ill.**

Develop a sick worker policy.

Educate and encourage employees to report the following:

- Vomiting
- Diarrhea
- Sore throat
- Infected cuts, sores, or boils on the hands or face

**Any ill employee should be excluded from food handling.** Many food borne outbreaks have been linked to an ill worker preparing food.

By following the information outlined in this brochure, you can help prevent your food from becoming contaminated by micro-organisms, unclean hands, unclean utensils, and chemicals.

If you have any questions about how this information affects your establishment, contact The Chemung County Health Department, **Environmental Health Services at 737-2019.**

### Public Information Law

Please be aware that food inspection reports are public records and are therefore subject to the *Freedom of Information Law (FOIL)*. This means that they can be accessed by the media as well as the public in general. If we receive FOIL requests we are required by law to release this information.

### Web Sites of Interest:

- ♦ Food & Drug Administration (FDA): **www.fda.gov** - *Information includes Food Code, recalls, Bug Book, and news*
- ♦ U.S. Dept. of Agriculture: **www.usda.gov** - *Get information on Meat & Poultry recalls and news items*
- ♦ Centers for Disease Control: **www.cdc.gov** - *Check out the latest Morbidity & Mortality Weekly Report (MMWR), outbreak reports & news*
- ♦ Food Safety & Inspection Service (USDA): **www.fsis.usda.gov** - *Consumer education and information*

**Chemung County Health Department - ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH SERVICES**  
**Critical Food Handling Issues Quiz**

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1. List three examples of Potentially Hazardous Foods (PHF):

1. \_\_\_\_\_ 2. \_\_\_\_\_ 3. \_\_\_\_\_

2. The "Danger Zone" is from \_\_\_\_\_°F to \_\_\_\_\_°F.

3. *Please circle the correct answer:*

**True / False** Tongs, waxed paper, or spoons are acceptable alternatives  
to avoid bare hand contact with ready-to-eat foods.

4. Food workers must wash their hands after:

- a) Eating
- b) Drinking
- c) Smoking
- d) Touching their hair or face
- e) Touching raw meat or raw eggs
- f) All of the above

5. A cook cuts up raw chicken, then uses the same cutting board to cut up raw carrots for salad without first cleaning and sanitizing the board. This dangerous practice is an example of \_\_\_\_\_.

6. *Please circle the correct answer:*

**True / False** It is acceptable to thaw food on the counter at room temperature.

7. The total cooling procedure should take place within \_\_\_\_\_ hours.

8. Previously cooked refrigerated PHF must be completely reheated to \_\_\_\_\_°F

9. *Please circle the correct answer:*

**True / False** Salads, such as potato salad, can be assembled using warm ingredients.

10. List two illness symptoms an employee should be educated about and encouraged to report:  
\_\_\_\_\_

11. What are the required cooking temperatures for the following foods:

Chicken: \_\_\_\_\_ Hamburger: \_\_\_\_\_ Eggs: \_\_\_\_\_

Pork: \_\_\_\_\_ Roast Beef: \_\_\_\_\_ Sausage: \_\_\_\_\_

**Completed by (employee name):** \_\_\_\_\_

**Reviewed with:** \_\_\_\_\_ **By (inspector):** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Facility:** \_\_\_\_\_