

CUYAHOGA COUNTY
BOARD OF HEALTH
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Food Safety Protocol

Guidelines for Taste-Testing Fruits & Vegetables in the Classroom

Worker Health and Cleanliness

1. Employees must be free from communicable disease symptoms before working with food or dishes.
2. Sore throat with fever, diarrhea, vomiting and jaundice (yellowed skin or eyes) can be symptoms of a communicable disease. If anyone in the facility has these symptoms, they should be excluded from work until they are symptom-free or can produce a doctor's note.
3. Employees caring for a sick family member with the symptoms listed above should also refrain from prepping food or doing dishes as they may have been exposed to a communicable disease.
4. Food prep workers with cuts or open sores on their exposed hands or arms must have them cleaned, bandaged and gloved/covered to prevent potential contamination.



5. Be aware of the most common foodborne illnesses and their requirements for exclusions and restrictions.
6. An employee illness log can be used to track and exclude ill employees.
7. Clean clothing and aprons should be worn and hair should be restrained to prevent food contamination.
8. Hands should be thoroughly washed for 20 seconds with warm, soapy water, rinsed, and then dried with a disposable towel. This should happen before touching food or equipment, after using the restroom, touching body parts or unclean objects and surfaces.
9. Gloves should be used to prevent food contamination by hands.

Making Sure the Environment and Equipment is Sanitary

A five-step process will eliminate pathogens (disease-causing) organisms from surfaces and equipment:

- a. Scrape or remove debris with warm soapy water prior to cleaning and sanitizing.
- b. Rinse with clear water to remove soap.
- c. Sanitize in bleach water solution of 50-100 ppm (3 tablespoons of bleach to one gallon of water).
- d. Allow objects to air dry or use a paper towel to dry prior to use.

Use clean wiping cloths and towels on surfaces that come in contact with food.

Always store sanitizer wipe rags in the sanitizer buckets to reduce pathogen growth.

Ensuring Food Safety

- Thoroughly wash fruits and vegetables under cold running water before preparing them.
- Discard any rotten or damaged produce.
- Once produce is cleaned, only gloved hands or utensils should touch food to prevent contamination
- Cleaned produce (ready to eat) should be stored covered to prevent contamination.
- When serving canned produce never use bulging or dented cans or food that has expired as it could contribute to foodborne illness.
- Use tasting plates and spoons to prevent double dipping and contamination.

Foods That Are Time & Temperature Controlled for Safety (TCS)

- TCS foods should be held out of the temperature danger zone of 41°F - 135°F to limit the growth of pathogens.
- When in doubt, hold food out of the temperature danger zone.
- TCS produce includes raw seed sprouts (bean and alfalfa), cut leafy greens, cut melons and cut tomatoes. Cooked vegetables and fruits can also sometimes be TCS.
- TCS foods should be date-marked to ensure a 7-day rotation.
- Keep dips, salad dressings and sauces which are TCS out of the temperature danger zone.

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