SAFE CATERING

safe catering –
your guide
to making
food safely

Food Standards Agency
food.gov.uk

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FOREWORD

Food hygiene regulations require that all food businesses, including caterers, apply food safety management procedures based on the principles of Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points (HACCP) to their businesses.

In order to help businesses comply with this requirement, the Food Standards Agency (FSA) in Northern Ireland and the Food Safety Authority of Ireland, working in partnership with representatives of the catering sector and Environmental Health Officers, have developed this Safe Catering guide. Other similar guidance materials have also been developed by the Food Standards Agency i.e. Safer Food Better Business developed in England and CookSafe in Scotland.

This joint initiative with the Food Safety Authority of Ireland is intended to assist with consistency of application of food hygiene legislation right across the island of Ireland.

FSA in NI would like to record its gratitude to members of the Safe Catering Consultative Group for the commitment, time, expertise and support they have given to the development of this guide.

I believe that the guidance contained within these pages will assist catering businesses, not only in building on existing good practice, but also in complying with food hygiene legislation. I am confident that this Safe Catering guide will prove a valuable resource to all of us committed to the very important issue of raising food safety standards and protecting consumers.

Maria Jennings

Maria Jennings
Director, Food Standards Agency in Northern Ireland
April 2019

Notes

1. It is the responsibility of the proprietors of food businesses to comply with current food safety legislation.

2. Only the Courts can interpret statutory legislation with any authority.

3. The advice given in this guide is based on information to hand and is subject to revision in the light of further information.

4. The guide is not intended to be a definitive guide to, nor a substitute for, the relevant law. Independent legal advice should be sought where appropriate.

Welcome To 'Safe Catering'

This **'Safe Catering'** guide has been developed principally for catering businesses, but it may also be used by retailers who have a catering function within the business.

This guide reflects the Food Standards Agency's position on controlling cross contamination of E.coli O157 and other food poisoning bacteria. E.coli O157 is a particularly harmful bacteria which can cause serious illness and even death if consumed even in very small numbers. The severity of illness and the lack of effective treatment mean that every consumer needs to be protected from the risk of food being contaminated by E.coli O157.

Catering premises undertake a wide range of food production activities which involve handling and preparation of both raw and ready-to-eat food. Therefore the potential for cross contamination is high and needs to be carefully controlled at every stage of food delivery, storage, handling, preparation and service.

Using Safe Catering in your business will help you to:
- **Comply with food hygiene law**
- **Ensure that the food you make is safe**
- **Train staff**
- **Protect your business's reputation**
- **Improve your business**

The owner and manager should take charge of this guide and work together with their staff to make sure that they use it effectively. Staff <u>must</u> be able to demonstrate a sound understanding of how to use this guide and should be able to produce it when requested by an inspecting Environmental Health Officer.

- **If you are the owner/director:** you are directly responsible for food safety in your business. You should discuss with your manager(s) (if you have one) how to make Safe Catering work in your business.

- **If you are a manager:** talk to the owner of the business about Safe Catering. If you are responsible for the day-to-day running of the business, then you are the best person to work through this guide, talking to your staff.

- **If you are a staff member:** you must work together with management to make food that is safe to eat.

This guide is based on the principles of HACCP (Hazard Analysis Critical Control Point). This is a process that helps you look at how you handle food and introduce procedures to make sure the food you produce is safe to eat.

HACCP involves the following 7 steps:
1. Identify what could go wrong (the **hazards**)
2. Identify the most important points where things can go wrong (**the critical control points – CCPs**)
3. Set **critical limits** at each CCP (e.g. cooking temperature/time)
4. Carry out checks at CCPs to prevent problems occurring (**monitoring**)
5. Decide what to do if something goes wrong (**corrective action**)
6. Prove that your HACCP Plan is working (**verification**)
7. Keep records of all of the above (**documentation**).

This HACCP Plan must be kept up to date. You will need to <u>review</u> it regularly, especially whenever something in your food operation changes.
You may also wish to ask your local Environmental Health Officer for advice.

This Safe Catering Guide may be downloaded from www.food.gov.uk/business-guidance/safe-catering

2.1 How to use Safe Catering

It is important that you read this section so you understand how **Safe Catering** works and what to do.

> **Safe Catering comprises the following sections:**
> • **Section 3 – Safe Catering Plan**
> • **Section 4 – Hygiene Requirements & Additional Guidance**
> • **Section 5 – Recording Forms & Additional Resources**

Information on how to complete each of these sections is outlined below.

2.2 How to Use Section 3 - Safe Catering

What you need to do:

• Complete your plan using a fine pointed permanent marker. This can be erased using methylated spirits or alcohol wipes (e.g. probe wipes) when you need to make modifications to your plan.

• Complete the details of your premises and persons involved in your Safe Catering Plan on page 1. Include a sketch of your premises layout on page 4 showing location of equipment, sinks, wash basins and separate areas for preparation of raw and ready-to-eat food.

• The coloured boxes on page 1 list the steps that are likely to be used by many catering operations.

• Review your menu and if it shows that you carry out any of the steps described, tick the relevant coloured boxes.

• The boxes that you have ticked show the steps where you must control hazards in your catering operation. The colours in the boxes relate to the coloured steps on pages 5 – 63.

• Note that hazards relating to Physical/Chemical Contaminants, Food Allergies and Acrylamide are hazards that exist in catering businesses and must be controlled.

• If you do not tick a specific coloured box you will not need to use that coloured section. You may consider moving these pages to the back of the document for later use should your catering operations change.

• List examples of the foods that are relevant to the step.

• Answer the questions and tick the boxes in each coloured section if they apply to you and ensure that you and your staff follow these procedures. Not every box may apply to your business.

• After every step you will find additional advice and good practice guidance relating to the food safety practices for that step. Ensure that you and relevant staff read and follow this advice.

• Information on how a step is structured and how to complete it is shown overleaf.

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Step: Storage

Examples of food

List here examples of foods which are relevant to the step

What can go wrong here? (Hazards)	What can I do about it? (Control/Critical Limits)	How can I check? (Monitoring/Verification)	What if it's not right? (Corrective Action)
Growth of food poisoning bacteria in cold ready-to-eat food.	Store below 8°C. ☐ I do this	Measure the temperature of the food by:- • taking the temperature of a 'dummy food' e.g. (pre-packed jelly or water). ☐ I do this • measuring core or surface temperature of food in fridge (when taking a core temperature, wash and disinfect the probe before and after use). ☐ I do this (Record on SC2, page xx)	If temperatures of food are recorded above 8°C......... Etc...

The '**What can go wrong here?**' column identifies what can go wrong (the hazard) at each particular step.

The '**What can I do about it?**' column gives you information on what you can do to control the hazard. Tick the box or boxes for the options you chose.

The '**How can I check?**' column tells you how you can check that you are controlling the hazard. Record your checks on the relevant record.

Throughout the plan you will see references to **food safety records**. Further information is given on page x.

The '**What if it's not right?**' column tells you what to do if something goes wrong and how to prevent it from happening again.

What you need to do (continued):

• If any steps in your catering operation are different from the types described on page 1, for example, serving raw or lightly cooked foods or vacuum packing, then you should complete a copy of the blank sheet on page 63.

• Complete the section on Physical/Chemical contamination, Food Allergies and Acrylamide on pages 65-81 by ticking the boxes which apply to you. Remember these controls may apply at all steps in your food handling operation from delivery to cooking and service of food to our customers.

• Complete the section on Food Allergies on pages 71 – 78 and again tick the controls and checks you have introduced. Again these controls apply to all steps in your business.

2.3 How to use Section 4 Hygiene Requirements & Additional Guidance

- Section 4 gives guidance on other hygiene requirements that must be addressed to assist your business in complying with the Law. There is guidance on:

    – Cleaning
    – Pest Control
    – Waste Control
    – Maintenance
    – Personal Hygiene
    – Training/Supervision

- There is also additional guidance in this section on how to use a probe thermometer.

What you need to do:

- The coloured boxes on page 1 list the other hygiene requirements which you must address.

- Tick the boxes to indicate that you have read and continuously implement each requirement as appropriate to your food business and instruct/train your staff accordingly and record in SC6, Section 5, page 8.

- Finally, complete and sign the Declaration of Completion of your Safe Catering Plan in Section 3, page 3.

Reviewing your Safe Catering Plan

- Remember to review your Safe Catering Plan regularly.

- A minimum of a yearly review is recommended, however, you should also review your Safe Catering Plan if anything in your food operation changes, e.g. use of new equipment, changes to your menu, a new product or change of recipe, changes in the structure or layout of the premises.

- Remember to sign and date your Declaration of Completion when the review has been completed.

- Include future review dates on the Declaration of Completion of your Safe Catering Plan in Section 3, page 3.

2.4. How to Use Section 5 – Recording Forms

- The following record forms are referred to in the Safe Catering Plan and these are provided in section 5.

    – SC1 – Food Delivery Records
    – SC2 – Fridge/Cold Room/Display Chill Temperature Records
    – SC3 – Cooking/Cooling/Re-heating Records
    – SC4 – Hot Holding/Display Records
    – SC5 – Hygiene Inspection Checklist
    – SC6 – Hygiene Training Records
    – SC7 – Fitness to Work Assessment Form
    – SC8 – All-in-One Daily Record
    – SC9 – Customer Delivery records

- Use the record forms provided in Section 5 to help you check that the food prepared on your premises is safe to eat and to help show the controls you are using.

- Keeping records accurately will help you comply with your legal requirements. This may also be useful as part of a due diligence defence. It is recommended that you keep records for at least 12 months. Your legal advisors may recommend a longer period or your Environmental Health Officer may ask you to keep them at least until his/her next inspection of your premises.

- Managers/Supervisors should check records kept by their staff. These checks can be recorded on each record form.

- Copies of forms can be downloaded from www.food.gov.uk/business-guidance/safe-catering

SAFE CATERING PLAN

Name of Premises: ....

Address of Premises: ....

....

Owner(s)/Director(s): ....

Person(s) involved in producing Safe Catering Plan: ....

Steps Used In Your Catering Operation

Tick the boxes for the steps that you use in your catering operation.

Purchase, Delivery/Receipt, Collection (Pages 5 – 9) ☐ I do this	**Cooking (Pages 37 – 44)** ☐ I do this
Storage (Pages 11 – 16) ☐ I do this	**Cooling/Freezing (Pages 45 – 48)** ☐ I do this
Preparation And Handling (Pages 17 – 26) ☐ I do this	**Reheating (Pages 49 – 52)** ☐ I do this
Cold Serve/Display (Pages 27 – 32) ☐ I do this	**Hot Hold/Display (Pages 53 – 56)** ☐ I do this
Defrosting (Pages 33 – 36) ☐ I do this	**Transport And Distribution (Pages 57 – 62)** ☐ I do this
	Additional Steps (Page 63) ☐ I do this

Note: Physical/Chemical contamination, Food Allergies and Acrylamide are hazards that exist in your business and must be controlled so <u>always</u> complete these sections on pages 65 - 81.

DECLARATION OF COMPLETION OF SAFE CATERING PLAN

I hereby certify that I .... (name)

....(position) have completed a Safe Catering Plan of

this business ....

....

....(Name and Address)

The following person(s) are responsible for ensuring that the Safe Catering Plan is implemented:

.... (name + position)

.... (name + position)

.... (name + position)

.... (name + position)

A layout plan of my business is included: YES ☐   NO ☐

I will review the Safe Catering Plan at least once a year and also if my catering operations change.

(See Section 2, page 3 – 'Reviewing your Safe Catering Plan')

Signed: .... Date: ....

Review Date Due	Date Review Completed	Signature

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Premises Layout Plan

Please include a sketch of your premises, showing location of equipment, sinks, washbasins and separate areas for preparation of raw and ready-to-eat food.

Premises Layout Plan

STEP: Purchase, Delivery/Receipt, Collection

Examples of ready-to-eat* food ....

....

....

What can go wrong here? (Hazards)	**What can I do about it?** (Control/Critical Limits)	**How can I check?** (Monitoring/Verification)	**What if it's not right?** (Corrective Action)
Contamination of food with food poisoning bacteria.	Buy from a reputable supplier and maintain a list of your approved suppliers. ☐ I do this (Use form on Page 9)	Check deliveries have come from suppliers on approved list. ☐ I do this Check that delivery vehicle is clean. ☐ I do this Visit and inspect supplier/check 3rd party audit reports/check supplier is registered with District Council. ☐ I do this	Reject food where you think it is unsafe to use and review supplier.
Growth of food poisoning bacteria in cold ready-to-eat food.	Make sure chilled ready-to-eat food is delivered below 8ºC. ☐ I do this Make sure frozen food is delivered frozen and place in frozen storage immediately. ☐ I do this Make sure that all cold ready-to-eat food is within its use-by-date. ☐ I do this	Check temperature of chilled ready-to-eat foods. (Record on SC1, Sec 5, page 2) ☐ I do this Check frozen ready-to-eat food is not defrosting. ☐ I do this Check delivery for date coding. (Record on SC1, Sec 5, Page 2) ☐ I do this	Reject chilled ready-to-eat food if temperature is above 8ºC. Reject frozen ready-to-eat food if showing signs of defrosting. Reject food if 'use by' date has passed.

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What can go wrong here? (Hazards)	What can I do about it? (Control/Critical Limits)	How can I check? (Monitoring/Verification)	What if it's not right? (Corrective Action)
Growth of food poisoning bacteria in hot ready-to-eat food.	Where food is delivered hot make sure it is delivered above 63°C. ☐ I do this	Check temperature of hot deliveries. (Record on SC1, Sec 5, Page 2) ☐ I do this	If temperature of high risk food has fallen below 63°C, reject the food.
Cross-contamination from raw to ready-to-eat food.	Keep raw and ready-to-eat foods separate during delivery/receipt/collection. ☐ I do this	Check raw and ready-to-eat food is kept separate. Observe staff practices during delivery. ☐ I do this	Reject food where you think it is unsafe to use and review supplier.
	Make sure food is protected by proper packaging/containers. ☐ I do this	Check packaging/containers and condition of food for signs of damage and/or contamination. ☐ I do this	Reject food which is not protected/is in damaged or dirty packaging or visibly contaminated.
	Remove outer packaging from ready-to-eat* food before bringing into a clean area**. ☐ I do this	Check that no outer packaging is in the clean area. ☐ I do this	Better training/retraining of staff.

Footnote:

* Ready-to-eat food is food that can safely be consumed without further heating or processing. These include cooked meats and poultry, smoked/cured fish, oysters, dairy products, desserts, prepared salads, sandwiches, soft cheeses and pre-cooked dishes such as quiche and cooked chicken.

** A 'clean area' is a room or an area within the food premises where only ready-to-eat food is handled. No raw foods can be handled here. The clean area might be fixed in the same location on a permanent basis or may be set up on a temporary basis following a thorough cleaning and disinfection process of the entire area (details on page 23). A temporary clean area should include clean storage facilities for storing ready-to-eat equipment and packaging when the temporary clean area is not in use.

Advice On Purchase, Delivery/ Receipt, Collection

Ordering Food

Go through your menu and estimate how much of each ingredient you will need. Plan ahead to make sure you have the right amount of stock and order carefully. Follow the first in, first out system of stock rotation so that the older stock is used first.

Suppliers

The starting point for making food safely is to be confident about the safety of your raw ingredients and any ready-made products you buy in. In order to make sure that the food you are buying has been handled safely you should choose your suppliers carefully.

It is important to have suppliers that you can trust to handle food safely, as well as delivering on time. It is a good idea to have a written agreement with your supplier about your delivery requirements.

In order to ensure that you use reputable suppliers it is recommended that you ask the following questions:
- Is the business registered with their District Council?
- Does the supplier have a food safety management system?
- Do they supply detailed invoices that include their name and address, details of products supplied including quantities and batch codes/Use by dates?
- Do they have any certification or quality assurance?
- Do they store, transport and pack their goods in a hygienic way and ensure that raw and ready-to-eat food is well separated?

You could also:
- Ask other businesses for recommendations.
- Contact a trade association for advice.

Traceability of food ingredients

You are expected to write down details of all your suppliers on your supplier list (use form on Page 9).

In order to comply with legislation regarding traceability, it is recommended that you keep all invoices and receipts of food. These should include details of the food product including the supplier details, quantity of products received, and the date.

Where the food supplied is of animal origin, e.g. meat, fish, dairy, details of any unique reference numbers or batch codes should also be recorded.

Keep invoices and receipts etc in a way that makes it easy for you or an Environmental Health Officer to check them.

If you have problems with your supplier, you can do the following things:
1. Contact the supplier/contractor by phone
2. Write a formal letter of complaint
3. Change supplier/contractor
4. Contact your local Environmental Health Officer for advice

Delivery/Receipt

You should carry out regular delivery time, temperature and quality spot checks to ensure that food is being supplied to you at the correct temperature and in good condition. For large deliveries randomly check a few of the items. Check to make sure that food:

- Has been delivered while the premises is open.
- Is adequately separated into raw and ready-to-eat to avoid cross-contamination.
- Is within its 'use by' or 'best before' date.
- Has been kept cold/hot enough as appropriate.
- Has not gone off.
- Is clean and not damaged, e.g. throw away any punctured vacuum packs, swollen packs or badly dented cans and check that tops are secure on bottles and jars and seals are unbroken.

If you do not think that the food a supplier delivers has been handled safely (for example, if you think it has not been kept cold enough or if you think ready-to-eat food may have been contaminated by bacteria present on raw food due to inadequate separation during transport) reject the delivery, contact your supplier immediately and record the details (record on SC1, Sec 5, page 2).

Deliveries should be unloaded in a clean, separate area. Delivery personnel should be discouraged from entering the kitchen. Outer packaging could have touched dirty floors etc. when it was stored/ transported prior to delivery to your premises. Remove outer packaging from food before bringing it into the kitchen or storeroom. This is particularly important as it will help to prevent bacteria from dirty outer packaging spreading to ready-to-eat foods.

If you remove food from its original packaging to another container, make sure you make a note of the name of the food, the ingredients and the 'use by' or 'best before' date (you may also wish to record a batch code). Put chilled food in the fridge and frozen food in the freezer as soon as it is delivered. If the temperature of chilled food is allowed to rise above 8°C or frozen food allowed to thaw, food poisoning bacteria could grow.

Manufacturer Temperature Specified

Some manufacturers may specify lower storage temperatures to ensure food safety. You must check to ensure that these temperatures are not exceeded on delivery.

Temperature checks of raw meat/fish/poultry

If raw food is to be temperature probed, it is essential that a separate, clearly distinguishable, probe thermometer is made available for this purpose. This is to prevent the transfer of bacteria from raw food to other foods, particularly ready-to-eat food.

Collection

If you buy food from a cash and carry or retailer, make sure that the vehicle you use to transport them is clean and that you bring chilled and frozen foods back as soon as possible and put them straight into a fridge or freezer. You may find that it is useful to use insulated cool bags/boxes. Care should be taken to keep raw and ready-to-eat food separate. This is necessary to avoid cross-contamination.

Suppliers List

Business Name	Address	Tel. No.	Foods Supplied

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STEP: STORAGE

Examples of food ....
....
....

What can go wrong here? (Hazards)	What can I do about it? (Control/Critical Limits)	How can I check? (Monitoring/Verification)	What if it's not right? (Corrective Action)
Growth of food poisoning bacteria in cold ready- to-eat food.	Store below 8°C. ☐ I do this	Measure the temperature of the food by:- • taking the temperature of a 'dummy' food (e.g. pre-packed jelly or water). ☐ I do this • measuring core or surface temperatures of food in fridge. (When taking a core temperature, wash and disinfect the probe before and after use.) ☐ I do this (Record on SC2, section 5 page 3) Measure the air temperature by:- • placing a probe thermometer for ready-to-eat food inside the unit. ☐ I do this • looking at the temperature of the display gauge (Cross-check periodically using probe thermometer and record on SC2). ☐ I do this	If temperatures of food are recorded above 8°C then:- • decide if food is safe to use or if it should be rejected. This will depend on the time and temperature the food has spent above 8°C. Contact Environmental Health Officer for advice if necessary. • check the operation of the fridge and adjust if necessary. Re-check temperature and record. • if a temperature of less than 8°C cannot be achieved, call engineer. • where possible, transfer food to another fridge. Store correctly to avoid cross-contamination
	Rotate stock to make sure foods are not kept too long. Make sure high risk food* is date-coded, including food which is prepared on the premises. ☐ I do this	Examine date codes daily. ☐ I do this (Record on SC5, Sec 5, Page 6 on a regular basis)	Throw out food once its date code has passed.

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What can go wrong here? (Hazards)	**What can I do about it?** (Control/Critical Limits)	**How can I check?** (Monitoring/Verification)	**What if it's not right?** (Corrective Action)
Contamination of cold ready-to-eat food with food poisoning bacteria.	This section has two options, you must choose one; Either 1. Store ready-to-eat food away from raw food by providing a separate fridge/freezer for ready-to-eat food in the clean area**. ☐ I do this Or 2. Store ready-to-eat food above and well separated from raw food in covered containers and in a clearly distinguishable part of the fridge/freezer. ☐ I do this	Regularly check how food is stored. ☐ I do this (Record on SC5, Sec 5, Page 6 on a regular basis)	Throw out ready-to-eat food if it may have been contaminated.

Footnote:

* High risk foods are those on which bacteria grow easily. These are ready-to-eat or will only receive light cooking which will not destroy any bacteria which may be present.

** A 'clean area' is a room or an area within the food premises where only ready-to-eat foods are handled. No raw foods can be handled here. The clean area might be fixed in the same location on a permanent basis or may be set up on a temporary basis following a thorough cleaning and disinfection process of the entire area (details on page 23). A temporary clean area should include clean storage facilities for storing ready-to-eat equipment and packaging when the temporary clean area is not in use.

Advice on Storage

Refrigeration

Certain foods need to be kept chilled to keep food poisoning bacteria from growing. For example:

- food with a 'use by' date.
- food that says 'keep refrigerated' on the label.
- food where the manufacturer's instructions say 'once opened keep refrigerated'.
- food you have cooked and will not serve immediately.
- ready-to-eat food such as cooked meats, salads and desserts.

Make sure that you do not use food after its 'use by' date. If you keep it any longer it might not be safe to eat.

Follow the food manufacturer's instructions on how to store the food, including how long it is safe to store food once opened, and any specific temperature requirements, as these are designed to keep it safe.

It is important to use equipment properly to make sure food is kept cold enough. Follow the manufacturer's instructions on how to use fridges and chilled display equipment. Fridges must not be over-stocked to allow cold air to circulate.

> Remember that chilled food must be kept at 8°C or below. To achieve this, it is recommended that fridges and chilled display equipment should be set at 5°C or below.

The Law allows certain tolerances to this requirement if there are unavoidable reasons such as:

(i) to accommodate the practicalities of handling during and after processing or preparation,
(ii) the defrosting of equipment, or
(iii) temporary breakdown of equipment

and the food may be kept at a temperature above 8°C for a limited period only and that the safety of the food must not be affected by this.

You should check the temperature of your chilling equipment at least once a day. Some equipment will have a digital or display dial to show what temperature it is set at. You can use this to check the temperature of your equipment. If you do this, you should check regularly that the temperature shown on the display/dial is accurate using a fridge thermometer.

Do not store food in opened tins. Transfer contents to clean covered containers.

Equipment Breakdown

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 your local Environmental Health Officer.

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.

Frozen Storage

Frozen food will keep for longer periods as bacteria and/or yeasts will not grow at very cold temperatures. Freezing, however, does not kill bacteria. Freezers should operate at a temperature of at least –18°C.

Frozen food should be placed in the freezer as soon as it is delivered. Raw and ready-to-eat food should be well wrapped and separated within the freezer to avoid cross-contamination. Date codes should be checked regularly and stock rotated. Fresh food which you freeze on your premises should be date-coded by you to make sure that it is used within a satisfactory time period. Storage times will vary depending on the type of food and on your particular freezer.

Freezers should be defrosted and cleaned on a regular basis and as recommended by the manufacturer.

If frozen food starts to defrost, food poisoning bacteria could grow. If you find that your freezer is not working properly, you should do the following things:

1. **Food that is still frozen** (i.e. hard and icy) should be moved to an alternative freezer. If there is not an alternative freezer, defrost food (see Defrosting step, page 35 – 36).

2. **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 for immediate use (see Defrosting step, page 35 – 36).

3. **Fully defrosted food** (i.e. soft) should be cooked, if appropriate (e.g. raw meat, poultry and fish), 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.

4. **Food that has to be kept frozen** cannot be re-frozen once it has started to defrost. You will have to use it immediately or throw it away.

Room Temperature Storage

Dry foods such as flour and rice should be stored in rooms which are clean, dry and well ventilated. Food should be kept off the floor and placed in covered food grade containers. When transferring food from its original packaging into containers, you should retain the ingredients list to ensure awareness of ingredients which may cause an allergy. The date code should also be marked on the container.

Swollen or 'blown' packs can be a sign that bacteria and/or yeasts have grown in food or drinks. Throw away any punctured vacuum packs, swollen packs or badly dented cans and check that tops are secure on bottles and jars and seals are unbroken.

Fruit and vegetables should be kept in a cool room and stored off the floor. They should be stored away from food which is cooked or ready-to-eat to avoid contamination from soil and bacteria.

Stock Control

Effective stock control is an important part of managing food safety.

Plan ahead to make sure you have the right amount of stock and order carefully. Not having too much stock is best for food safety. In order to control your stock consider the following:

- Plan the stock you need for each shift.
- Make sure staff know the stock requirements for each shift.
- Use a supplier who understands your business needs and supplies stock on time.
- Discuss your needs with your supplier.
- Do a stock check before placing an order.
- Review your menu regularly and how it affects your need for stock.

> **Carry out regular stock checks and throw away any food that has passed its 'use by' date.**

To keep track of when food should be used or thrown away follow this advice:

- For dishes you have prepared or cooked, it is a good idea to use stickers, or another safe method of labelling.
- Follow the 'first in, first out' system of stock rotation, so that older stock is used first to avoid waste.
- Train your staff in stock control and make sure they know in what order to use foods.
- Check regularly that stock control is being carried out effectively.

If you find that you have more food in stock than you need and you do not think you will use it all before the 'use by' date, you could freeze some of it to be used in the future. If you are doing this, it is a good idea to use labels to record the date of freezing.

Cross-contamination

Separating raw and ready-to-eat food is essential to prevent harmful food poisoning bacteria, such as E.coli O157, from spreading.

Where possible, separate fridges should be used for storing raw and ready-to-eat food. If they are in the same fridge, raw meat/poultry/fish should always be stored below ready-to-eat food in a clearly distinguishable part of the fridge and in covered containers. This helps to prevent food poisoning bacteria spreading from raw food to ready-to-eat food e.g. by blood or juices dripping. Staff should also take extra care when placing food into fridges and freezers to ensure clothing and hands do not become contaminated by raw food.

It is important to keep food covered to help protect it from food poisoning bacteria and to prevent it from physical contamination. This is especially important for ready-to-eat food. Suggested food coverings include kitchen foil, cling film, plastic boxes with lids or freezer bags. All packaging should be food grade.

Other raw foods such as unwashed fruit and vegetables can be a source of food poisoning bacteria such as E.coli O157 and these must also be stored separately from ready-to-eat food.

> **If you think that ready-to-eat food has not been kept separate from raw meat/poultry/fish, eggs or unprepared fruit/vegetables during storage, throw away the food.**

It is also important to make sure that when storing wrapping and packaging to be used for ready-to-eat food it is also kept in a separate clean area away from raw food and used only for ready-to-eat food.

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STEP: Preparation & Handling

Examples of food ....

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What can go wrong here? (Hazards)	What can I do about it? (Control/Critical Limits)	How can I check? (Monitoring/Verification)	What if it's not right? (Corrective Action)
Growth of food poisoning bacteria in ready-to-eat food.	Time the food spends outside the fridge should be as short as possible. ☐ I do this Take out small quantities of food from fridge at a time. ☐ I do this	Look at staff practices. ☐ I do this (Record on SC5, Sec 5, Page 6 on a regular basis)	Consider if the food is safe to use. Dispose of unsafe food. More supervision/ better training/re-training of staff.
Contamination of ready-to-eat food with food poisoning bacteria that may be on raw food, surfaces, utensils, equipment and packaging.	This section has three options, you must choose one; Either Provide a separate clean room(s) for handling/ preparation of ready-to-eat food only. ☐ I do this Or Provide a permanent clean area** for handling/ preparation of ready-to-eat food ☐ I do this Or Provide a temporary clean area for handling/ preparation of ready-to-eat food by following the checklist on page 23 ☐ I do this	Check that the clean room or clean area is only being used for ready-to-eat food. (Record on SC5, Page 6 on a regular basis) ☐ I do this	Consider if the food is safe to use. Dispose of unsafe food. More supervision/ better training/re-training of staff.

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What can go wrong here? (Hazards)	What can I do about it? (Control/Critical Limits)	How can I check? (Monitoring/Verification)	What if it's not right? (Corrective Action)
	This section has 2 options, you must choose one; Either Use separate clearly distinguishable, e.g. colour coded, chopping boards, containers, knives, tongs, or other utensils for ready-to-eat food. ☐ I do this OR Use a dishwasher to clean and disinfect chopping boards, containers, knives, tongs, and other utensils if separate ones are not available. ☐ I do this Or other suitable method of heat disinfection. Specify _____ ☐ I do this	Check that separate colour coded chopping boards, containers, knives, tongs, and other utensils are being used for ready-to-eat food only and are stored in the clean area. ☐ I do this Check that the dishwasher is in good working order, well maintained and serviced regularly and used in accordance with manufacturer's instructions. ☐ I do this (Record on SC5, Sec 5, Page 6)	More supervision/better training/re-training of staff. Re-wash the chopping boards, containers, knives, tongs, utensils etc and service or replace the dishwasher.
	In this section, you must choose <u>all</u> of the following; Complex equipment* such as vacuum packing machines, meat slicers, mincing machines, used for ready-to-eat food must not be used for raw food. ☐ I do this Complex equipment such as vacuum packing machines, meat slicers, mincing machines, used for ready-to-eat food must be kept in the clean area at all times. ☐ I do this Ensure wrapping and packaging materials for use with ready-to-eat food e.g. cling film, trays and cartons, are stored and used in the clean area only. ☐ I do this	Check that complex equipment for ready-to-eat food is NOT used for raw food. ☐ I do this Check that complex equipment for ready-to-eat food is kept in the clean area. ☐ I do this Check wrapping and packaging materials for ready-to-eat food are being used correctly and stored in the clean area. ☐ I do this (Record on SC5, Page 6)	Dispose of unsafe food. Dispose of unsafe food. Dispose of potentially contaminated packaging.

What can go wrong here? (Hazards)	What can I do about it? (Control/Critical Limits)	How can I check? (Monitoring/Verification)	What if it's not right? (Corrective Action)
Contamination of ready-to-eat food with food poisoning bacteria that may be on hands or staff clothing.	This section has two options, you must choose one; Either Ensure staff handling/ preparing ready-to-eat food do not handle raw food. ☐ I do this Or Ensure staff remove contaminated work clothing and wash hands thoroughly before handling/preparing ready-to-eat food or entering a clean area. ☐ I do this And (if you choose the option above, then you must choose this one also); Ensure staff wash their hands regularly using an effective technique (Sec 4, page 19) and especially after touching raw food and before handling ready-to-eat food/equipment/utensils. ☐ I do this	Observe staff practices while handling food. (Record on SC5, Sec 5, Page 6 on a regular basis) ☐ I do this Train all staff who handle food in effective handwashing technique. ☐ I do this (Record on SC5, Page 6 on a regular basis)	More supervision/ better training/ retraining of staff. Re-train all staff who handle food in effective handwashing technique.
	This section has 4 options, select those that apply to your operation; Use colour coded disposable aprons for different activities. ☐ I do this Handle food as little as possible. ☐ I do this Use tongs or other utensils where appropriate. ☐ I do this Use disposable gloves correctly where appropriate. ☐ I do this	Look at staff practices while handling food. (Record on SC5) ☐ I do this	More supervision/ better training/ re-training of staff.

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What can go wrong here? (Hazards)	What can I do about it? (Control/Critical Limits)	How can I check? (Monitoring/Verification)	What if it's not right? (Corrective Action)
Contamination of ready-to-eat food with food poisoning bacteria that may be on cleaning materials including cloths and sponges.	This section has two options, you must choose one; Either Use single-use disposable roll in clean areas where ready-to-eat food is handled/prepared. ☐ I do this Or Make sure re-usable cleaning cloths are laundered in a boil wash cycle. ☐ I do this	Check disposable roll is being used in clean areas and discarded after each use. ☐ I do this Check that re-usable cloths are being boil washed. ☐ I do this (Record on SC5)	More supervision/ better training/re-training of staff. Re-wash the cloths in a boil wash cycle. Replace/repair the washing machine if necessary.
Contamination of ready-to-eat fruit and vegetables with food poisoning bacteria (e.g. from soil).	Trim and wash thoroughly under clean water and peel/ cook if necessary (unless supplied bagged and labelled as ready-to-eat). ☐ I do this	Look at the food. Check the label. ☐ I do this	Wash more thoroughly or throw out.
	This section has two options, you must choose one; Either Use separate clearly identifiable, e.g. colour coded, chopping boards, containers, knives, tongs and utensils for ready-to-eat fruit and vegetables. ☐ I do this Or Use a dishwasher to clean and disinfect chopping boards, containers, knives, tongs and utensils etc if separate ones are not available ☐ I do this Or other suitable method of heat disinfection. Specify ☐ .... I do this	Check that separate colour coded chopping boards, containers, knives tongs, and other utensils are being used for ready-to-eat food only and are stored in the clean area. ☐ I do this (Record on SC5, Sec 5, Page 6 on a regular basis) Check that the dishwasher is in good working order, well maintained and serviced regularly and used in accordance with manufacturer's instructions. ☐ I do this	More supervision/ better training/re-training of staff. Re-wash the chopping boards, containers, knives, tongs, utensils etc and service the dishwasher.

Footnotes:

*   Complex equipment is the term given to those items of equipment that can be very difficult to clean. This may be because it is hard to access all parts of the equipment or because it is made up of a number of small parts and surfaces which may not be smooth or easy to clean. For these reasons complex equipment provided for use on ready-to-eat food should not be used for raw food.

**   A 'clean area' is a room or an area within the food premises where only ready-to-eat foods are handled. No raw foods can be handled here. The clean area might be fixed in the same location on a permanent basis or may be set up on a temporary basis following a thorough cleaning and disinfection process of the entire area (details on page 23). A temporary clean area should include clean storage facilities for storing ready-to-eat equipment and packaging when the temporary clean area is not in use.

Advice on Preparation and Handling

What is Cross-contamination

Cross-contamination occurs when harmful bacteria that may be present on raw foods such as raw meat and unwashed fruit and vegetables are transferred onto other foods or surfaces. These surfaces may include worktops, equipment, hands or utensils.

Cross-contamination can occur in two ways;

- Direct cross-contamination where there is direct contact and transfer of bacteria from raw to ready-to-eat food.

- Indirect cross-contamination where bacteria pass from raw food to ready-to-eat food via contaminated work surfaces, hands, equipment or utensils.

Foods which are likely to be a source of contamination include:

- Raw meat.

- Unwashed fruit and vegetables, especially those that are visibly dirty. Unless supplied pre-packed and labelled as ready-to-eat, all fruit and vegetables should be trimmed and thoroughly washed in clean water before eating. Peeling and cooking are additional methods of ensuring they are safe.

- Other raw foods such as fish, shellfish and eggs.

Preventing Cross-contamination

To prevent cross-contamination you must ensure that raw food and ready-to-eat food is adequately separated at all times during delivery, handling, storage, preparation, cooking and serving. This may be done by designating a room or work area for the storage, handling and preparation of ready-to-eat food only. This is known as the **'clean area'**. The work surfaces, equipment and utensils in the clean area must only be used for ready-to-eat food. It is a good idea to colour code equipment and utensils in this area to ensure that staff can easily identify them. Raw food or equipment and utensils used for raw food must never enter the clean area.

Where it is not possible to have a separate clean area on a permanent basis then it is possible to do this on a temporary basis but will require strict supervision to ensure that extra controls such as handwashing, cleaning and disinfection can address the potential risk from cross-contamination.

Use the following checklist as a procedure to follow when providing a temporary clean area;

- Select a suitable location to be used as a temporary clean area as far away from raw food handling and preparation as possible. Ensure that work surfaces and walls are smooth, impervious and easy to clean.

- Remove all raw food ingredients or potential sources of E.coli O157 from this area.

- Thoroughly clean and disinfect the area using the 2 stage cleaning process explained in Section 4, page 3.

- Provide equipment and utensils such as chopping boards, containers, utensils etc, in the clean area for use with **ready-to-eat food only**, unless heat disinfected using a dishwasher. It is a good idea to colour code equipment used for ready-to-eat food so that staff can identify it easily.

- Ensure staff wash their hands thoroughly and put on clean protective clothing before working in the clean area.

- Don't use the worktop directly in a temporary clean area, always use chopping boards or other suitable barriers as the food contact surface.

- Remember to provide clean storage for storing clean ready-to-eat equipment and packaging when the temporary clean area is not in use.

Use the pull out 'clean area' sign provided in this pack (pictured) to display on the wall after the checklist has been followed. This will allow other staff to clearly see that the area is in use for ready-to-eat food only.

Staff Considerations

Where possible, separate staff should be provided for working in the clean area. If this is not possible, the movement of staff from a raw area into a clean area where ready-to-eat food is handled should be kept to an absolute minimum and will only be acceptable if the following controls are put in place:-

• Staff change work clothing/aprons before entering a clean area, and
• Wash hands thoroughly, using the effective handwashing technique illustrated on page 19 of Section 4, to prevent spread of contamination via hands.

(Refer to page 18 of Section 4 for more information on personal hygiene).

Equipment and Utensils

As mentioned above, separate equipment and utensils such as chopping boards, containers, utensils etc, should be provided for use in the clean area with ready-to-eat food only (unless it can be heat disinfected in a dishwasher). It is also a good idea to colour code equipment used for ready-to-eat food so that staff can identify it easily.

Complex equipment

Complex equipment is the term given to items of equipment that can be very difficult to clean. This may be because it is hard to access all parts of the equipment or because it is made up of a number of small parts and surfaces which may not be smooth or easy to clean. Examples of complex equipment include:

• Vacuum packers
• Meat slicers
• Mincers

> Separate complex equipment should be provided for use in clean areas for ready-to-eat food only. The same equipment should NOT be used for raw food.

Vacuum packer

Meat slicer

If you slice cooked meat

Avoid handling the cooked meat as much as possible. It is a good idea to slice cooked meat straight onto the display tray or the plastic film/paper you will use to wrap it as hands can easily spread food poisoning bacteria onto the food. Cooked meats must never be left on the slicer at room temperature after slicing.

Preparing fruit, vegetables and salad ingredients

Dirt and soil on fruit, vegetables and salad ingredients can contain food poisoning bacteria such as E.coli O157. When preparing fruit, vegetables and salad ingredients:

- Peel, trim, or remove the outer parts, as appropriate.
- Wash them thoroughly by rubbing vigorously in clean water and then rinsing.
- If you have washed vegetables that had dirt or soil on the outside, remember to clean and disinfect sinks afterwards particularly before using the same sink for rinsing ready-to-eat foods such as rice and pasta. Foods being washed or rinsed should be done in such a way to avoid contact with the sink both during and after washing/rinsing
- e.g. in a bowl, container or colander.
- Separate chopping boards are required for unwashed fruit and vegetables and those that are ready-to-eat (unless heat disinfected in a dishwasher between uses).
- Do not re-wash vegetables supplied as ready-to-eat as this may re-contaminate the food.

What to do if things go wrong

> If you think that ready-to-eat food has not been kept separate from raw meat/poultry/fish, eggs and unwashed fruit/vegetables, throw away the food.
>
> If equipment/surfaces/utensils have been touched by raw meat/poultry, eggs and unprepared fruit/ vegetables wash, disinfect and dry them to prevent food poisoning bacteria from spreading.
>
> If in any doubt about what actions should be taken, advice should be sought from your local Environmental Health Officer.

Foods requiring special care during handling

Foods such as oysters, beef carpaccio and sushi, which are eaten raw, require to be handled as carefully as ready-to-eat foods, however, these foods still present a contamination risk to other ready-to-eat foods.

These foods should be handled by someone with specialist knowledge.

These foods require storage and handling separately from both conventional raw foods such as raw meat and other ready-to-eat foods.

> The service of raw and partially cooked foods presents a hazard which cannot be fully controlled.

Helpful hints

- Try to limit the number of staff that handle raw food.
- Try to reduce handling of raw food by using utensils, tongs or disposable gloves. It is a good idea to use colour coded utensils.
- Consider buying in raw food which is already prepared and requires little handling or preparation. This could save time and money.

STEP: Cold Serve/Display

Examples of food ....
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....

What can go wrong here? (Hazards)	What can I do about it? (Control/Critical Limits)	How can I check? (Monitoring/Verification)	What if it's not right? (Corrective Action)
Growth of food poisoning bacteria in ready-to-eat food.	Display below 8°C. ☐ I do this	Measure the temperature of food in the display unit by: **Taking the temperature of a 'dummy' food** (e.g. pre-packed jelly or water). ☐ I do this **Measuring the core or surface temperatures of food on display** (when taking a core temperature wash and disinfect the probe before and after use). ☐ I do this (Record on SC2, Sec 5, Page 3) **Measure the air temperature by:-** • placing a probe thermometer inside the unit. ☐ I do this • **looking at the temperature of the display gauge.** (Cross check periodically using a temperature probe and record on SC2). ☐ I do this (Record on SC2, Sec 5, Page 3)	If temperature of food is recorded above 8°C , then: • Throw out the food if above 8°C for over 4 hours or if time period unknown. • Check the operation of the fridge and adjust if necessary. • If a temperature of less than 8°C cannot be achieved call engineer. • Where possible transfer food to another display fridge. Store correctly to avoid cross-contamination.
	If food is not displayed below 8 °C restrict display period to less than 4 hours.* ☐ I do this * (The Law requires that food can be displayed above 8 °C for sale or service for only **one** period of up to 4 hours. Food remaining on display for up to 4 hours must be chilled to 8 °C or less and kept at that temperature until used or thrown away).	Check length of time on display. ☐ I do this	Chill to under 8°C or throw out any food displayed above 8 °C for more than 4 hours.

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What can go wrong here? (Hazards)	What can I do about it? (Control/Critical Limits)	How can I check? (Monitoring/Verification)	What if it's not right? (Corrective Action)
Contamination of ready-to-eat food by food poisoning bacteria.	Use clean equipment, utensils and cloths. ☐ I do this	Check equipment, utensils, cloths. Look at the cleaning taking place to check that it is done properly. (Record on SC5, Sec 5, Page 6 on a regular basis) ☐ I do this	Clean equipment/ utensils. Wash or replace cloths. Repair/replace equipment/utensils which cannot be properly cleaned. Review cleaning schedules and practices.
	This section has two options, you must choose one; Either		
	Use separate clearly distinguishable utensils, e.g. colour coded, tongs, chopping boards, knives or other utensils for ready-to-eat food. ☐ I do this Or	Check that separate colour coded tongs, chopping boards, knives and utensils are being used for ready-to-eat food only and stored in the clean area. ☐ I do this	More supervision/ better training/re-training of staff
	Use a dishwasher to clean and disinfect chopping boards, knives, utensils, tongs etc if separate ones not available. ☐ I do this or other suitable method of heat disinfection Specify_____ ☐ I do this	Check that the dishwasher is in good working order, well maintained and serviced regularly and used in accordance with manufacturer's instructions. ☐ I do this	Re-wash the chopping boards, knives, utensils etc and service or replace the dishwasher.
	Make sure food is protected and/or covered where appropriate e.g. sneeze guards or covers. ☐ I do this	Check food on display. ☐ I do this (Record on SC5, Sec 5, Page 6)	Discard ready-to-eat food if it may have been contaminated.
	Encourage customers to use tongs or other utensils (where appropriate). ☐ I do this		
	Make sure staff wash their hands thoroughly before handling cold ready-to-eat food or equipment/utensils. ☐ I do this		

What can go wrong here? (Hazards)	**What can I do about it?** (Control/Critical Limits)	**How can I check?** (Monitoring/Verification)	**What if it's not right?** (Corrective Action)
Contamination of ready-to-eat food by food poisoning bacteria. (continued)	Make sure staff use tongs/ spoons to handle food. ☐ I do this	Look at staff/customer practices. (Record on SC5, Sec 5, Page 6 on a regular basis) ☐ I do this	More supervision/ better training/re- training of staff.
	Make sure staff use gloves correctly where appropriate. ☐ I do this		
	Make sure staff use other method to handle food. Specify_____ _____ _____		

Advice on Cold Serve/Display

Refrigeration Advice

Certain foods need to be kept chilled to keep them safe, e.g.

- Food with a 'use-by date'.
- Food that says 'keep refrigerated' on the label.
- Food where the manufacturers instructions say 'once opened keep refrigerated'.
- Food you have cooked and will not serve immediately.
- Ready-to-eat foods such as cooked meats, salads and desserts.

If these types of food are not kept cold enough food poisoning bacteria could grow.

It is important to use equipment properly to make sure food is kept cold enough. Follow the manufacturer's instructions on how to use fridges and chilled display equipment.

> **It is recommended that fridges and chilled display equipment should be at 5°C or below.**
> **This is to make sure that cold food is kept at 8°C or below. This is a legal requirement.**

Some equipment will have a digital or dial display to show what temperature it is set at. You can use this to check the temperature of your equipment. If you do this, you should check regularly that the temperature shown is accurate using a fridge thermometer.

You should check the temperature of your chilled display equipment at least once per day, remembering the following points:

- Pre-cool display unit before you put cold food in it.
- Only display as much food as you think you will need.
- Display food for the shortest time possible.

You could also:

- Use a dummy portion for display (which will not be eaten).
- Use photographs to show customers what the food looks like.

Equipment Breakdown

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, throw the food out (you may wish to contact your Environmental Health Officer for advice).

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.

Displaying food out of chilled storage

Chilled food must be kept at 8°C or below, except for certain circumstances, e.g. when you display cold food such as a buffet you should use suitable chilled display equipment to keep it at 8°C or below. If this is not possible you can display food out of chilled storage for up to 4 hours. **You can only do this once**.

After this time, you should either put the food back in the fridge and keep it at 8°C or below until it is used, or throw it away.

If you do take food out of chilled storage to display it, remember not to mix new food with the food that is already on display. This could lead to the older food being left out for too long.

Avoiding contamination

It is important to avoid cross contamination when cold food is on display for sale or service.

Remember the following points:

- Introduce staff practices which will eliminate hand contact with ready-to-eat displayed foods (e.g. use of tongs). If using gloves, make sure staff refer to advice section on Personal Hygiene, Page 18.

- Protect displayed foods from contamination by customers. The use of sneeze guards is recommended. If customers are required to serve themselves, ensure the appropriate utensils are available e.g. long handled serving spoons etc. These utensils should be cleaned and disinfected regularly. The self service activity should be regularly monitored by your staff.

- Repair or replace any utensils which are damaged, deeply scored or have loose parts. Replace any cracked or chipped crockery.

- Consider special arrangements for the display and handling of any allergy free foods (Refer to advice section on Food Allergies, Page 73).

- Remove food from display fridges while cleaning and disinfecting the inside of such units.
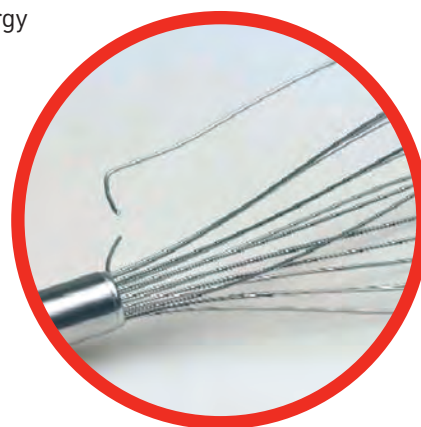
STEP: Defrosting

Examples of food ....

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What can go wrong here? (Hazards)	What can I do about it? (Control/Critical Limits)	How can I check? (Monitoring/Verification)	What if it's not right? (Corrective Action)
Growth of food poisoning bacteria.	Make sure that frozen foods, especially poultry and large joints, are thoroughly defrosted before cooking – unless manufacturer states otherwise. ☐ I do this Provide details of methods used to defrost food:	Ensure that foods are fully defrosted by: • checking for ice in the food using your hand, skewer or a probe thermometer (wash and disinfect the probe before and after use) ☐ I do this • With poultry, check the joints are flexible. ☐ I do this	Defrost for a longer period.
	Make sure defrosted food if not cooked immediately is date coded and refrigerated. ☐ I do this	Look at staff practices (Record on SC5, Sec 5, Page 6) ☐ I do this	More supervision/ better training/ re-training of staff
Cross-contamination from raw to ready-to-eat food.	While defrosting keep raw and ready-to-eat food separate. ☐ I do this Specify method	Regularly check how food is defrosted. (Record on SC5, Sec 5, Page 6) ☐ I do this	Dispose of ready-to-eat food which may be contaminated Clean and disinfect contaminated areas. Review staff training.

Advice on Defrosting

Food poisoning bacteria can grow in food that it is not defrosted properly. It must 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. The outside of the food could be cooked, but the centre might not be, which means it could contain food poisoning bacteria.

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

Options for defrosting food

1. Putting food in the fridge will keep it at a safe temperature while it is defrosting. Ideally, plan ahead to leave enough time and space to defrost small amounts of food in the fridge.

2. You could put the food in a container with a lid 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. If defrosting poultry under cold running water ensure that splashing does not contaminate other foods or surfaces. Clean and disinfect the sink and surrounding area afterwards.

3. A fast way to defrost food is in the microwave on the 'defrost' setting. This method is not recommended for foods which will not be cooked immediately as the temperature of the outside of the food may rise allowing food poisoning bacteria to grow.

4. You could also defrost food at room temperature. Foods will defrost quite quickly at room temperature, but food poisoning bacteria could grow if the food gets too warm while defrosting. This method is not recommended for ready-to-eat foods that you have prepared yourself and that will not be cooked or reheated after defrosting. Ideally defrost these foods in the fridge.

5. For bought in ready-to-eat foods, e.g. cheesecake, follow the manufacturer's defrosting instructions.

Checking

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.

1. Check for ice in the food using your hand, a skewer or a probe thermometer (a separate thermometer should be used for ready-to-eat food and you must remember to wash and disinfect the probe before and after use).

2. With poultry, check the joints are flexible.

If food has not fully defrosted:

- Continue to defrost the food until there is no ice left. Test again before cooking or reheating.

- Speed up the defrosting process, e.g. by using cold running water or a microwave.

If you are having problems with defrosting food consider the following:

- Change your defrosting method and make it safer, e.g. defrost smaller amounts.

- Make sure you allow enough time to defrost.

- Train staff again on safe methods of defrosting.

- Improve staff supervision.

- If you defrost lots of food in your business you may wish to consider creating extra fridge space.

STEP: Cooking

Examples of food ....

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What can go wrong here? (Hazards)	**What can I do about it?** (Control/Critical Limits)	**How can I check?** (Monitoring/Verification)	**What if it's not right?** (Corrective Action)
Survival of food poisoning bacteria if food is not properly cooked.	Cook food thoroughly to kill food poisoning bacteria, e.g. • Cook to 75°C or hotter. ☐ **I do this**	Use a probe thermometer for ready-to-eat food to measure the temperature of the thickest part of the food. (Wash and disinfect the probe before and after use) (Record on SC3, Sec 5, Page 4) ☐ **I do this**	Cook the food for longer.
	• specify cooking time/ oven temperature to ensure food reaches **75°C** (Use equipment time/temperature combinations form on page 44) ☐ **I do this**	Cross-check regularly using a probe thermometer for ready-to-eat food to measure the temperature of the thickest part of the food. (Wash and disinfect the probe before and after use). (Record on SC3, Sec 5, Page 4) ☐ **I do this**	Review your cooking method. You might need to increase the time or temperature or use different equipment or reduce portion sizes. Repair/replace equipment.
	• look at the food to ensure it is properly cooked. ☐ **I do this**	Check that: • All outside surfaces of whole joints/cuts (e.g. steaks) are fully cooked e.g. by sealing in a pan ☐ **I do this** • Poultry is fully cooked in thickest part of leg. (no pink or red meat or juices) ☐ **I do this** • Processed meat products e.g. sausages/burgers and whole cuts of pork are piping hot right through with no pink or red in centre. ☐ **I do this**	Cook the food for longer. Review your cooking method.

SAFE CATERING

What can go wrong here? (Hazards)	**What can I do about it?** (Control/Critical Limits)	**How can I check?** (Monitoring/Verification)	**What if it's not right?** (Corrective Action)
Survival of food poisoning bacteria if food is not properly cooked. (continued)		Liquids bubble rapidly when stirred. ☐ I do this	
		Colour and texture of fish change at centre or near bone of fish. ☐ I do this	
		The largest piece of meat in stews, curries etc should be piping hot all the way through with no pink or red. ☐ I do this	
		Combination dishes are steaming in centre e.g. shepherd's pie. ☐ I do this	Cook the food for longer. Review your cooking method.
		No pink or red juices run out of rolled joints when skewered. ☐ I do this	
		Shellfish e.g. prawns have changed colour/texture. ☐ I do this	
		Mussel/clam shells open and mussel/clam has shrunk inside. ☐ I do this	
	• follow manufacturer's instructions. ☐ I do this	Cross check regularly using a probe thermometer for ready-to-eat food **to measure the temperature of the thickest part of the food.** (Wash and disinfect the probe before and after use). (Record on SC3, Sec 5, Page 4) ☐ I do this	Cook the food for longer until the thickest part reaches 75°C. Repair/Replace equipment.
		Check the food to ensure it is properly cooked. (as detailed in list above). ☐ I do this	

Advice on Cooking

Cooking is a critical step to ensure that any bacteria that may be present in food are completely killed and the food is safe to eat. It is essential that cooking is carried out properly.

Safe Cooking Tips

- 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. Raw food can carry food poisoning bacteria, which could spread onto cooked food and stop it being safe.

Checking That Foods Are Properly Cooked

Check that poultry is cooked properly in the thickest part of the leg. The meat should not be pink or red and the juices should not have any pink or red in them.
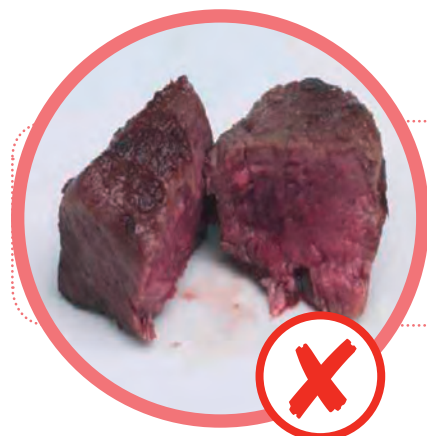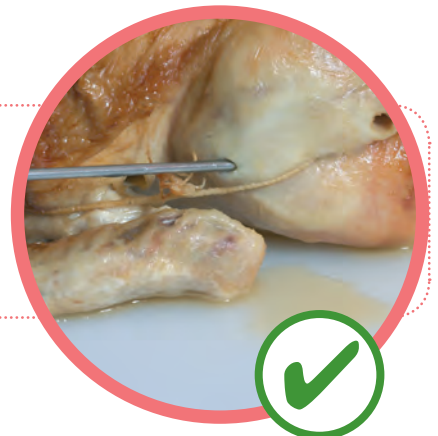
The largest piece of meat in stews, curries etc. should be piping hot all the way through with no pink or red in the centre.

SAFE CATERING
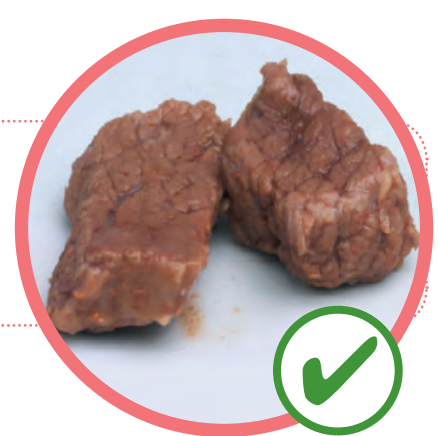
Check that sausages and burgers are thoroughly cooked and piping hot all the way through with no pink or red in the centre. This is because they may have bacteria spread throughout. Whole cuts of pork should also be thoroughly cooked.

Check that combination dishes are piping hot (steaming) in the centre. If you are cooking a large dish or batch, check in several places. (Remember large dishes or batches require a longer cooking time).

Check that liquid dishes bubble rapidly when you stir them. This is to make sure the food is hot enough to cook it thoroughly and kill food poisoning bacteria. Stir liquid dishes frequently. This is to help make sure the food is the same temperature all the way through, with no cold spots.

Check that all the outside surfaces of whole cuts of meat and whole joints (beef or lamb) are fully cooked. This will kill food poisoning bacteria which are only on the outside of the meat. Pork and rolled joints should not be served rare.

Cut into the centre of fish, or near the bone if there is one, to check that the colour and texture has changed. Whole pieces of fish (e.g. tuna steaks) can be served 'rare' as long as they have been fully seared on the outside.

To check a pork joint or rolled meat joint, insert a skewer into the centre until juices run out. The juices should not have any pink or red in them.

Turn meat and poultry during cooking as this helps it cook more evenly.

Foods that need extra care

Remember that raw meat and poultry are often the main source of bacteria in the kitchen. Follow the advice in the Cooking step on how to cook these foods. You should also take care with the following foods:

Eggs

Cook eggs and foods containing eggs thoroughly until they are piping hot. Eggs can contain food poisoning bacteria (Salmonella). If you cook them thoroughly this kills any bacteria. Check that the egg is cooked until the white is solid. (The safest option is to cook the egg until the yolk is also solid).

Use pasteurised egg in any food that will not be cooked, or lightly cooked, e.g. mayonnaise and mousse. Pasteurisation also kills bacteria, which is why pasteurised egg is the safest option.

Do not use eggs after the 'best before' date.
Class A eggs should be used.

Shellfish

> Make sure you buy shellfish from a reputable supplier. If you do not use a reputable supplier, you cannot be confident that shellfish have been caught and handled safely.

Crabs, crayfish and lobster 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.

Shellfish such as prawns and scallops will change in colour and texture when they are cooked. For example, prawns turn from blue-grey to pink and scallops become milky white and firm.

If you use ready-cooked (pink) prawns, serve them cold or reheat them until they are piping hot all the way through.

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 **after** cooking and that the mussel or clam has shrunk inside the shell. If the shell has not opened during cooking, throw it away.

Rice

It is essential to handle rice safely to make sure it is safe to eat. Uncooked rice can contain spores of Bacillus cereus, bacteria that can cause food poisoning.

When rice is cooked, make sure you keep it hot until serving or chill it down as quickly as possible, ideally within an hour, and then keep it in the fridge.

When the rice is cooked, the spores can survive. Then, if the cooked rice is left standing at room temperature, the bacteria could start growing again from the spores. These bacteria will multiply and may produce toxins (poisons) that cause vomiting or diarrhoea. Reheating the rice won't get rid of these toxins.

Pulses

Follow the instructions on the packaging on how to soak and cook dried pulses, such as red kidney beans.

Pulses can contain natural toxins that could make people ill unless they are destroyed by the proper method of soaking and cooking.

Tinned pulses will have been soaked and cooked already.

Equipment Time/Temperature Combinations

Use this form to specify time/temperature combinations to ensure food is cooked or reheated to 75°C. Cross-check regularly using calibrated probe thermometer and record food temperatures in SC3, Sec 5, page 4.

Food (Specify Whether Raw Or Cooked)	Portion Size	Equipment (E.g. Oven/ microwave)	Equipment Setting (E.g. Oven Temperature/ Microwave Power Level)	Cooking Or Reheating Time	Temp. Reached

STEP: Cooling/Freezing

Examples of food ....

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What can go wrong here? (Hazards)	What can I do about it? (Control/Critical Limits)	How can I check? (Monitoring/Verification)	What if it's not right? (Corrective Action)
Growth of food poisoning bacteria.	Reduce the temperature of cooked food to below 8ºC as quickly as possible after cooking. • Within 2 hours* place cooked food in: ☐ I do this - Walk-in chill ☐ - Storage fridge ☐ - Blast chiller ☐ - Freezer ☐ (*For larger joints and whole birds e.g. turkeys, a longer initial cooling period may be required.) Cool by other method ☐ I do this Specify:	Check times. ☐ I do this (Record on SC3, Sec 5, Page 4)	Improve cooling procedures/ facilities. Throw out any food that has not been cooled safely.
Cross-contamination of cooked food with food poisoning bacteria.	Cool in clean containers in an area away from raw food or other sources of contamination. ☐ I do this	Look at where and how food is cooled. ☐ I do this (Record on SC5, Sec 5, Page 6 on a regular basis)	Throw out any cooked food if it may have been contaminated.
	Food handlers must observe good standards of personal hygiene in order to avoid contamination, especially if food has to be handled while **still warm.** (bacteria will multiply more rapidly in warm food.) ☐ I do this	Look at staff practices. ☐ I do this (Record on SC5, Sec 5, Page 6 on a regular basis)	More supervision/ better training/ retraining of staff.

Advice On Cooling/Freezing

Cooling/Chilling Hot Foods

Food poisoning bacteria can grow in food that is left to cool slowly.

> **If you have cooked food that you will not serve immediately, cool it down as quickly as possible and then put it in the fridge/freezer within two hours. For larger joints and whole birds, a longer initial cooling period may be required.**

Do not put foods that are not sufficiently cooled into the fridge as this may raise the temperature of the fridge and cause condensation.

It is important to protect food from dirt and bacteria at all times while cooling and chilling whatever method you use.

> **If food has not been cooled down safely throw it away.**

Options for cooling/chilling down food

(You can use one or more of these)

1. Use a blast chiller to chill down food especially if you chill down lots of food in your business. A blast chiller is specially designed to chill down hot foods quickly and safely.

2. Divide food into smaller portions. Smaller amounts of food cool down more quickly.
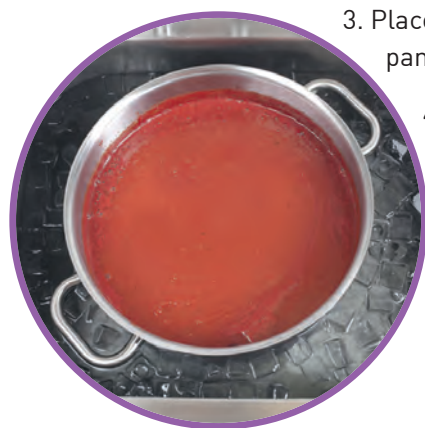
3. Place pans of hot food in cold water. The cold water makes the contents of the pans cool more quickly.

4. While food is cooling down, stir regularly with a clean utensil. Stirring helps food cool more evenly.

5. Move hot food to a colder area (e.g. a larder). Food will cool more quickly in a colder place.

6. Some ovens have a 'cool' setting, which can help to cool down food by increasing the airflow around it. (The oven should be cool first).

Comparing different cooling/chilling options

If you would like to compare different cooling/chilling options, try them out with the same food. You will only need to do this once. When you have just cooked the food, use a probe thermometer to test its temperature. Then test the temperature again at regular intervals to find out how fast the food is being cooled down. Remember to use a clean probe for ready-to-eat foods each time you check the food. Repeat the process with different cooling/chilling options to find out which is most effective.

If you are having problems in chilling food consider the following:

- Review your cooling methods and change method of cooling if necessary.
- Avoid cooking large quantities of food in advance. Large quantities of food are more difficult to cool down quickly, especially solid food.
- If you chill down large quantities of hot food in your business you may wish to consider using a blast chiller.
- Make sure you always allow enough time and make portions small enough.
- Train staff again.
- Improve staff supervision.

Cooling Rice

It is essential to handle rice safely to make sure it is safe to eat. Uncooked rice can contain spores of Bacillus cereus, bacteria that can cause food poisoning.

When the rice is cooked, make sure you keep it hot until serving or chill it down as quickly as possible, ideally within one hour, and then keep it in the fridge. When the rice is cooked the spores can survive, and if the rice is left standing at room temperature, the bacteria could start growing again from the spores. These bacteria will multiply and may produce toxins (poisons) that cause vomiting or diarrhoea. Reheating the rice won't get rid of these toxins.

You can cool rice down more quickly by dividing it into smaller portions, spreading it out on clean tray, or running it under cold water (make sure the water is clean and of drinking quality).

Freezing

If you are freezing fresh food, freeze it as soon as it has been prepared.

Freeze hot food as soon as it has been properly cooled down. The longer you wait before freezing food, the greater the chance of food poisoning bacteria growing.

Divide food into smaller portions and put it in containers or freezer bags before freezing. Smaller portions will freeze (and defrost) more quickly. The centre of larger portions takes longer to freeze, allowing food poisoning bacteria to grow. Using containers or freezer bags prevents cross-contamination.

For dishes you have prepared or cooked for freezing, it is a good idea to use labels, or another method of marking, to record the date of freezing. This will help you with stock rotation.

STEP: Reheating

What can go wrong here? (Hazards)	What can I do about it? (Control/Critical Limits)	How can I check? (Monitoring/Verification)	What if it's not right? (Corrective Action)
Survival of food poisoning bacteria if food is not properly reheated.	Reheat food thoroughly to kill food poisoning bacteria e.g. • 75°C or hotter. ☐ I do this	Use a probe thermometer for ready-to-eat food to measure the temperature of the thickest part of the food. (Wash and disinfect the probe before and after use). ☐ I do this (Record on SC3, Sec 5, Page 4)	Continue reheating the food for longer until the thickest part reaches 75°C.
	• specify cooking time/oven temperature to ensure food reaches 75°C. ☐ I do this (Use equipment time/temperature combinations form on page 44)	Cross-check regularly using a probe thermometer for ready-to-eat food to measure the temperature of the thickest part of the food. (Wash and disinfect the probe before and after use). ☐ I do this (Record on SC3, Sec 5, Page 4)	Review your reheating method. You might need to increase the time or temperature or use different equipment or reduce portion sizes. Repair/replace equipment.
	• look at the food to ensure it is properly reheated. ☐ I do this	Check that: • reheated food is piping hot (steaming) all the way through. ☐ I do this • Liquids bubble rapidly when stirred. ☐ I do this	Reheat the food for longer. Review your reheating method.

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What can go wrong here? (Hazards)	**What can I do about it?** (Control/Critical Limits)	**How can I check?** (Monitoring/Verification)	**What if it's not right?** (Corrective Action)
Survival of food poisoning bacteria if food is not properly reheated. (continued)	• follow manufacturer's instructions. ☐ I do this NOTE: It is recommended that the finished dish is reheated only once.	Cross-check regularly using a probe thermometer for ready-to-eat food to measure the temperature of the thickest part of the food. (Wash and disinfect the probe before and after use). ☐ I do this (Record on SC3, Sec 5, Page 4) Check that: • reheated food is piping hot (steaming) all the way through. ☐ I do this • Liquids bubble rapidly when stirred. ☐ I do this	Reheat the food for longer until the thickest part reaches 75°C. Improve staff supervision. Repair/replace equipment.

Advice on Reheating

Reheating means cooking again, not just warming up. Always reheat food until it is piping hot all the way through (you should only do this once).

Make sure you use equipment that reheats 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.

Establish the appropriate equipment setting and time combination for individual products to ensure the food reaches a core temperature of 75°C (use form on page 44).

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. The manufacturer has tested their instructions to make sure that products will be properly reheated. 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 food poisoning bacteria could grow.

Check that reheated food is piping hot (steaming) all the way through.

Liquids should be bubbling and steaming.

Combination dishes should be piping hot (steaming) in the centre.

If you are having problems reheating food consider the following:

- 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.

STEP: Hot Hold/Display

Examples of food ....

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What can go wrong here? (Hazards)	**What can I do about it?** (Control/Critical Limits)	**How can I check?** (Monitoring/Verification)	**What if it's not right?** (Corrective Action)
Growth of food poisoning bacteria.	If hot food will be on display for more than 2 hours, keep above 63°C. ☐ I do this	If food is kept on display for more than 2 hours measure the temperature every two hours. ☐ I do this (Record on SC4, Sec 5, Page 5)	If the temperature of the food has fallen below 63°C, either: • Cool quickly and refrigerate for reheating or serving cold (Refer to Cooling /Freezing section on pages 47 – 48). • Reheat to 75°C and put back into hot holding. • Throw out the food. Note: It is recommended that food is reheated only once. Check/repair equipment.
Contamination of hot food with food poisoning bacteria.	Use clean equipment and utensils for ready-to-eat food. ☐ I do this	Check equipment is clean. ☐ I do this (Record on SC5, Sec 5, Page 6 on a regular basis)	Clean equipment. Repair/replace equipment which cannot be properly cleaned.

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What can go wrong here? (Hazards)	**What can I do about it?** (Control/Critical Limits)	**How can I check?** (Monitoring/Verification)	**What if it's not right?** (Corrective Action)
Contamination of hot food with food poisoning bacteria. (continued)	This section has 2 options, you must choose one; Either Use separate clearly distinguishable utensils, e.g. colour coded, tongs, chopping boards, knives or other utensils for ready-to-eat food. ☐ I do this Or Use a dishwasher to clean and disinfect chopping boards, knives, utensils, tongs etc if separate ones not available. ☐ I do this Or other suitable method of heat disinfection. Specify: .... ☐ I do this	Check that separate colour coded tongs, chopping boards, knives and utensils for ready-to-eat food are being used correctly and in the correct location. ☐ I do this Check that the dishwasher is in good working order, well maintained and serviced regularly and used in accordance with manufacturer's instructions. ☐ I do this (Record on SC5, Sec 5, Page 6)	More supervision/ better training/ re-training of staff. Re-wash the chopping boards, knives, utensils etc and service or replace the dishwasher.
	Make sure food is protected and/or covered where appropriate e.g. sneeze guards or covers. ☐ I do this Encourage customers to use tongs or other utensils. ☐ I do this Make sure staff use tongs/ spoons to handle food. ☐ I do this Make sure staff wash their hands properly before handling hot food and particularly after handling or touching raw food. ☐ I do this Use other method to handle food. Specify: .... ☐ I do this	Look at staff/ customer practices. ☐ I do this (Record on SC5) Observe staff hand washing practices to ensure that the effective technique is being used (Sec 4, page 19) and taking place regularly. ☐ I do this (Record on SC5)	Throw out food if it may have been contaminated. More supervision/ better training/ retraining of staff. Staff re-trained in effective hand washing procedures.

Advice on Hot Holding

Food in hot holding must be kept above 63°C (with certain exceptions – see below).

When you display hot food, e.g. on a buffet, you should use suitable hot holding equipment to keep it above 63°C. It is difficult to hold food at a consistent, safe temperature without suitable equipment.

Preheat hot holding equipment before you put any food in it. Putting food into cold equipment means it might not be kept hot enough to stop food poisoning bacteria growing.

> **Food must be cooked/reheated thoroughly and piping hot before hot holding begins. Hot holding equipment is for hot holding only. It should not be used to cook or reheat food.**

If you are concerned about the effect of hot holding on the quality of food, reduce the length of time you keep food hot – not the temperature. Food poisoning bacteria could grow in food if it is not kept hot enough.

If a dish is not hot enough at any point during hot holding, either:

- Reheat it until it is piping hot and put back into hot holding ensuring that the temperature remains over 63°C or
- Cool down the food safely to 8°C or below and reheat it later before serving.

If you cannot do either of these things, throw the food away.
Remember that you should only reheat food once.

If you are having problems in hot holding food consider the following:

- Check your equipment is working correctly.

- Review your method of hot holding. Try using a higher temperature setting or smaller quantities of food.

- Train staff again.

- Improve staff supervision.

Hot food displayed outside temperature control

The Law permits hot food to be displayed out of temperature control for up to two hours.
You can only do this once.

After this time, you should either reheat the food until it is piping hot and put it into hot holding above 63°C, chill it down as quickly as possible to 8°C or below, or throw it away. Remember to keep the food at a safe temperature until it is used.

If you do take food out of temperature control to display it, remember not to mix new food with the food that is already on display. This could lead to the older food being left out for too long.

STEP: Transport & Distribution

Examples of food ....

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What can go wrong here? (Hazards)	What can I do about it? (Control/Critical Limits)	How can I check? (Monitoring/Verification)	What if it's not right? (Corrective Action)
Contamination of ready-to-eat food with food poisoning bacteria from raw food and contaminated packaging.	Make sure food is protected by using clean food grade packaging/containers for ready-to-eat food. ☐ I do this	Check packaging/containers are clean and in good condition. ☐ I do this	Discard food if you think it is unsafe.
	This section has two options, you must choose one; Either Use separate designated compartments in delivery vehicles for ready-to-eat food. ☐ I do this Or Use other suitable alternative method to ensure adequate separation of raw and ready to eat food during transport and distribution. ☐ I do this Please specify	Check that raw and ready-to-eat food is adequately separated at all stages of transport and distribution. ☐ I do this (Record in Customer delivery Record SC9, Sec 5, page 12)	Dispose of ready-to-eat food which may have been contaminated. Review staff practices. Review staff training.
	Ensure storage compartments are kept clean and are thoroughly cleaned before and after distribution. ☐ I do this	Check food storage facilities within distribution vehicles are kept clean. ☐ I do this (Record on cleaning schedule Sec 4, Page 10)	Review cleaning practices. Review staff training.
	Delivery personnel to exercise good hygienic practice and wash hands/change clothing where visibly soiled. ☐ I do this	Check that delivery personnel exercise good personal hygiene and have change of clothing if required. ☐ I do this	Review staff training.

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What can go wrong here? (Hazards)	What can I do about it? (Control/Critical Limits)	How can I check? (Monitoring/Verification)	What if it's not right? (Corrective Action)
Growth of food poisoning bacteria in chilled ready-to-eat food.	Transport food below 8°C by means of: A refrigerated vehicle ☐ I do this A refrigerated container ☐ I do this Other method. Please specify	Measure the air temperature by: • placing a probe thermometer inside the unit. ☐ I do this • looking at the temperature of the display gauge. ☐ I do this (Cross-check periodically using designated probe thermometer) • Check temperature of food at the point of delivery. ☐ I do this (Record in Customer Delivery Record SC9, Sec 5, page 12)	If temperatures of food are recorded above 8°C, then: • decide if food is safe to use. This will depend on the temperature and time the food has spent above 8 °C. • Check the operation of the refrigeration equipment and adjust. • If the temperature cannot be restored to below 8°C the food should be returned to the food premises and refrigerated. If there is any doubt about the safety of the food it should be isolated until an informed decision can be taken. • Contact Environmental Health Officer for advice if necessary.
Growth of food poisoning bacteria in hot ready-to-eat food.	Ensure food is above 63°C during transport. Specify how temperature is maintained.	Check the temperature of hot food at the point of delivery: Use a designated probe thermometer for ready-to-eat food to measure the temperature of the thickest part of the food. (Wash and disinfect the probe before and after use). ☐ I do this (Record in SC9, Sec 5, page 12) Other method please specify -	If the temperature of the food has fallen below 63°C decide if the food is safe to be reheated or if it should be disposed of. This will depend on the length of time the food has fallen below 63°C. If in doubt contact your Environmental Health officer.

Transport and Distribution

Some catering businesses may be involved in outside catering operations or supplying their products to other retail/catering businesses. If you supply hot or chilled food to other retail/catering businesses, care should be taken to prevent food being contaminated during transport and distribution.

Preventing cross-contamination

Ready-to-eat food supplied from a catering business is at risk from contamination with food poisoning bacteria from raw food if both are transported together. It is essential that both raw and ready-to-eat foods are fully wrapped and kept separate during transportation.

Separate, clean, food grade containers should be used for food in transit. Delivery drivers handling both raw and ready-to-eat foods should exercise good personal hygiene and wash their hands regularly.

> **What to do if things go wrong:**
>
> **If you think that ready-to-eat food has been contaminated by raw food it should be disposed of.**

Temperature Control

- In order to prevent the growth of harmful bacteria cold ready-to-eat food should be transported and distributed at a temperature of 8°C or below and hot ready-to-eat food at a temperature of 63°C or above.

- The transport vehicle or containers must be capable of maintaining the foodstuffs at the appropriate temperatures and allow the temperatures to be monitored.

- Temperature monitoring can be carried out either by the use of thermometers built into the vehicles or containers or alternatively by using designated calibrated thermometers. It is important that the temperature of the food is measured and not the temperature of food holding equipment.

> **What to do if things go wrong:**
>
> **If during transportation the temperature of cold ready-to-eat food is found to be above 8°C or below 63°C for hot ready-to-eat food you will have to decide if the food is safe. This will depend on the temperature and the time which the food has spent above or below the appropriate temperature.**
>
> **Food should be disposed of if there is any doubt about its safety. Advice should be sought from your local Environmental Health Officer if necessary.**

Traceability

In order to comply with legislation regarding traceability, you should be able to identify other businesses which you supply with food or food ingredients and details should be recorded (use customer list on page 61). You should keep records of the deliveries of foods you supply to other businesses using SC9 - Customer Delivery Record, Section 5, page 12. This will help you to record the types of food you supply to your customers, the date, the quantity, any unique batch codes or Use by dates as well as the temperature of the food.

It is recommended that you keep all invoices relating to distribution of food.

Keep invoices and receipts etc in a way that makes it easy for you or an Environmental Health Officer to check them.

Customer List

Business Name	Address	Tel. No.	Foods Supplied

Additional Steps:

Use this sheet for any steps which are additional to those outlined on page 1 of this section (e.g. vacuum packing, serving raw or lightly cooked foods, liquidising ready-to-eat food).

Examples of food ....

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What can go wrong here? (Hazards)	**What can I do about it?** (Control/Critical Limits)	**How can I check?** (Monitoring/Verification)	**What if it's not right?** (Corrective Action)

Physical/Chemical Contamination

These Hazards, Controls And Checks Apply To All Steps

What can go wrong here? (Hazards)	What can I do about it? (Control/Critical Limits)	How can I check? (Monitoring/Verification)	What if it's not right? (Corrective Action)
Receipt of food contaminated with physical objects, chemicals or pests.	Buy from a reputable supplier and maintain a list of your approved suppliers. ☐ I do this (Use form on Page 9)	Check deliveries have come from suppliers on approved list. ☐ I do this. Check that delivery vehicle is clean. ☐ I do this. Visit and inspect supplier/check third party audit reports/check supplier is registered with district council. ☐ I do this	Consider using a different supplier.
	Make sure food is free from contamination by foreign objects, chemicals or pests. ☐ I do this	Check packaging of food is not damaged. ☐ I do this. Look for signs of pests or other contamination/foreign bodies. ☐ I do this	Reject food which may have been contaminated with any foreign objects/chemicals or pests.
Contamination from personnel, e.g. hair, buttons, jewellery, etc.	Make sure personnel wear suitable, clean, protective clothing. ☐ I do this. Make sure personnel tie hair back and wear a hat and/or hair net. ☐ I do this	Check personnel are wearing protective clothing. (Record on SC5, Sec 5, Page 6) ☐ I do this. Check personnel head covering. (Record on SC5, Page 6) ☐ I do this	More supervision/ better training/ retraining of staff. More supervision of other people entering food handling areas.
	Limit jewellery to a single plain wedding band. ☐ I do this	Check jewellery worn by staff. (Record on SC5, Page 6) ☐ I do this	Request removal of jewellery.

What can go wrong here? (Hazards)	What can I do about it? (Control/Critical Limits)	How can I check? (Monitoring/Verification)	What if it's not right? (Corrective Action)
Contamination of food within premises by foreign objects, e.g. metal nuts, bolts, ceramic pieces, wood splinters, rust, paint.	Keep food covered/contained where possible. ☐ I do this	Check foods are covered. (Record on SC5, Sec 5, Page 6) ☐ I do this	Throw out food which may have been contaminated.
	Keep surfaces clear and clean. ☐ I do this	Check surfaces regularly. (Record on SC5, Page 6) ☐ I do this	Throw out food which may have been contaminated and clean surface.
	Maintain structure and equipment properly. ☐ I do this	Check structure and equipment are in good condition. (Record on SC5, Page 6) ☐ I do this	Repair/replace structure and equipment.
Contamination of food with glass.	Limit use of glass items, particularly for storage and during preparation. ☐ I do this	Check that glass items are not used where possible. Where glass items are used, make sure they are in good condition. ☐ I do this	Replace glass items with those made from plastic/stainless steel or other suitable materials. Remove damaged glass items.
	Cover light fittings in areas where open food is handled. ☐ I do this	Check light fittings are covered. ☐ I do this	Fit light covers.
	Introduce glass policy. ☐ I do this	Check glass policy is followed. ☐ I do this	Improve procedures. Better supervision/training/re-training of staff. Discard any food which may have been contaminated in the premises.
Contamination of food with staples, plastic and other packaging materials.	Dispose of wrappings/string etc carefully as soon as it is removed. ☐ I do this	Check staff practices. ☐ I do this	Improve procedures. Better supervision/training/retraining of staff.

SAFE CATERING

What can go wrong here? (Hazards)	What can I do about it? (Control/Critical Limits)	How can I check? (Monitoring/Verification)	What if it's not right? (Corrective Action)
Contamination of food with stones, soil, slugs, etc.	Wash vegetables thoroughly. ☐ I do this	Check staff practices. ☐ I do this	Rewash vegetables.
Contamination of food with pest droppings and insects.	Employ a pest control company. ☐ I do this	Check pest control contract is up to date and recommendations are carried out. ☐ I do this	Review contract with pest control company.
	Pest control carried out by competent person. ☐ I do this	Check premises are free from pests. ☐ I do this	Deal with pests and review pest control procedures.
	Make sure premises are pest-proof. ☐ I do this	Check premises are pest-proof and free from pests. ☐ I do this (Record on SC5, Page 6)	Improve premises and pest control measures. Wash and disinfect any surfaces or equipment which pests may have been in contact with.
	Fit flyscreens to windows/doors where necessary. ☐ I do this	Check flyscreens are fitted and maintained. ☐ I do this	Fit/repair flyscreens.
	Store food in pest-proof containers. ☐ I do this	Check staff practices. ☐ I do this	More supervision/ better/ training/ retraining of staff. Discard any food which may have been contaminated in the premises.

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What can go wrong here? (Hazards)	What can I do about it? (Control/Critical Limits)	How can I check? (Monitoring/Verification)	What if it's not right? (Corrective Action)
Contamination of food with chemicals e.g. cleaning chemicals and pesticides.	Store chemicals in properly labelled containers and follow manufacturer's instructions. ☐ I do this	Check storage and use of chemicals. ☐ I do this (Record on SC5, Sec 5, Page 6)	Provide suitable storage area for cleaning materials. Review cleaning methods. Discard any food which may have been contaminated in the premises.
	Do not spray/use cleaning chemicals near uncovered foods. ☐ I do this		
	Make sure cleaning chemicals are suitable for surfaces touched by food. ☐ I do this		
	Make sure food containers and coverings are food grade. ☐ I do this		

Advice on Physical/Chemical Contamination

It is very important to prevent objects and chemicals getting into food to prevent injury to your customers. There are many types of potential physical and chemical contaminants within your business such as hair, jewellery, cleaning chemicals, pest droppings, glass, nuts, bolts etc. **Where possible, keep food covered to stop things falling into it.**
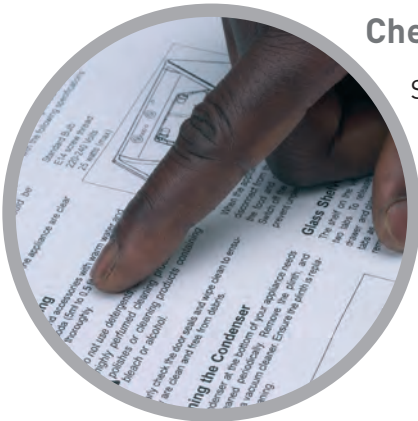
Chemical

Store cleaning chemicals separately from food to prevent them getting into food as they may be poisonous to people. Make sure all chemicals are clearly labelled. Follow the manufacturer's instructions carefully on how to use and store cleaning chemicals. Make sure that all cleaning chemicals you use are suitable for surfaces in contact with food.

Pests

Make sure you control pests effectively (see advice on Pest Control, Section 4, Page 11). Make sure that any chemicals you use to control pests are used and stored in the correct way and are clearly labelled.

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

Personal Hygiene

Work clothes should be long sleeved and light coloured to show the dirt with no external pockets and suitable head covering. This prevents skin from touching food and helps to stop hair, fibres and the contents of pockets getting onto food (see further advice on Personal Hygiene, page 18).

Repair Equipment

Repair or replace any equipment or utensils that are damaged or have loose parts as loose parts may get into food by accident.

Glass

It is a good idea to limit the use of glass in the kitchen as this helps to reduce the risk of broken glass getting into food. Suitable diffusers on light fittings are recommended.

Packaging

Take care to throw away packaging, strings and plastic as soon as you remove it, to prevent it contaminating the food. Keeping surfaces clear and clean will prevent chemicals and objects getting into food as well as preventing the spread of bacteria.

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 (food grade).

Stones/Soil etc

Ensure all deliveries are physically checked and vegetables are thoroughly washed to prevent stones/ slugs etc contaminating the food.

What to do if things go wrong

- **If chemicals or objects, such as glass or insects, get into food, throw the food away.**

- **If you find pests or signs of pests, take action immediately.**

- **If you find objects in food that has been delivered, reject the delivery, if possible, and contact your supplier immediately.**

Food Allergies

What can go wrong here? (Hazards)	What can I do about it? (Control/Critical Limits)	How can I check? (Monitoring/Verification)	What if it's not right? (Corrective Action)
Unwitting consumption of food containing allergens by the customer.	Follow advice on Food Allergies, Page 73. ☐ I do this	Check staff awareness and practices. ☐ I do this	Improve staff awareness/more supervision/ better training/ retraining of staff.
	Train staff. ☐ I do this	(Record on SC5, Page 6)	
	(Record on SC6, Sec 5, Page 8)		

Advice on Food Allergies

Allergens

> **Allergens are substances, usually protein, which cause the body's immune system to respond. In severe cases this may result in an anaphylactic shock and even death.**

Symptoms can include:

- generalised flushing of the skin.
- swelling of the throat and mouth.
- conjunctivitis (itchy swollen eyes).
- rhinitis (swollen, itchy or runny nose).
- severe asthma.
- constriction of the airways (wheeze).
- sudden feeling of weakness (fall in blood pressure).
- hives / nettle rash.
- difficulty in swallowing or speaking.
- abdominal pain, nausea and/or vomiting.
- diarrhoea.
- collapse and unconsciousness.

Foods That Can Cause Reactions

It is important to alert customers to inform staff if they have allergies to any foods, in particular any of the following: Cereals containing gluten, shellfish, eggs, fish, peanuts, milk, nuts, soya, sesame seeds, celery, mustard, lupin, sulphur dioxide and sulphites.

Peanuts

Peanuts, also called groundnuts and monkey nuts, are found in many foods, including sauces (e.g. satay sauce), cakes and desserts. They are common in Thai and Indonesian dishes. Watch out for peanut flour and groundnut oil too.

Nuts

People with nut allergy can react to many types of nut, including walnuts, almonds, hazelnuts, Brazil nuts, pistachios, cashews, pecans, macadamia nut and queensland nut. Nuts are found in many foods, including sauces, desserts, crackers, bread, and ice cream. Watch out for nut oils, praline (which includes hazelnut), marzipan (which includes almond) and ground almonds too.

Milk

People with milk allergy need to avoid foods containing milk, yoghurt, cream, cheese, butter and other milk products from cows, sheep, goats and other related mammals. Watch out for dishes glazed with milk and ready-made products containing milk powder, or other milk ingredients (casein, whey powder).

People with lactose intolerance need to avoid lactose, the sugar found in milk. They need to avoid food containing milk and milk products from cows and other related mammals.

Eggs

Eggs are used in many foods including cakes, mousses, sauces, pasta and quiche. Sometimes egg is used to bind meat products, such as burgers. Watch out for dressings containing mayonnaise (which may contain raw egg) and dishes brushed with egg as well as lecithin E322 (if made from egg).
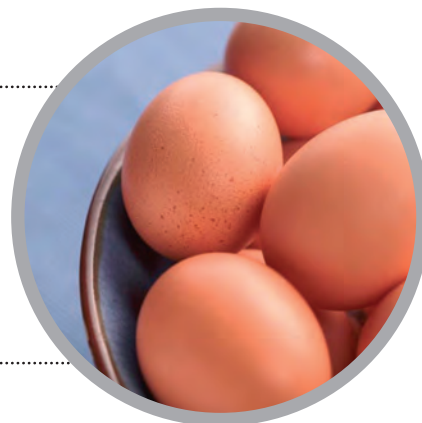
Fish

People who are allergic to fish need to avoid all species of fish.

Some types of fish, especially anchovies, are used in salad dressings, sauces, relishes and on pizzas. Fish sauce is commonly used in Thai dishes.

Crustaceans

People who are allergic to crustaceans need to avoid prawns, lobster, scampi and crab. Watch out for shrimp paste in Chinese and Thai dishes.
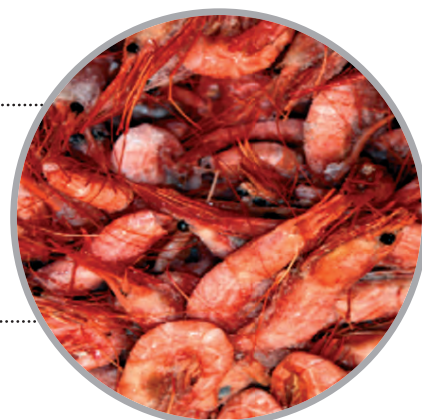
Molluscs

People who are allergic to molluscs need to avoid clams, mussels, whelks, oysters, snails and squid. Watch out for oyster sauce in Chinese and Thai dishes.
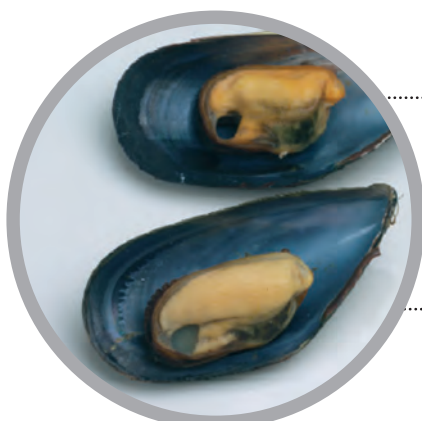
Soya

Soya comes in different forms, for example, tofu (or beancurd), soya flour, lecithin E322 (if made from soya) and textured soya protein. It is found in many foods, including ice cream, sauces, desserts, meat products and vegetarian products such as 'veggie burgers'.

Cereals containing gluten

People who have gluten intolerance (also called Coeliac disease) need to avoid foods containing gluten, a type of protein found in cereals such as wheat (spelt and Khorsan wheat/Kamut), rye, barley and oats, and foods made from these. Wheat flour is used in many foods such as bread, pasta, cakes, pastry and meat products and in some foods that you might not expect, such as stock cubes, gravy granules and spice mixes. Watch out for soups and sauces thickened with flour, foods that are dusted with flour before cooking, batter and breadcrumbs. Flours made from other foods such as maize, rice, millet, chickpea or buckwheat naturally do not contain gluten however due to milling process may be contaminated with cereals containing gluten. If making a dish for a person with a gluten intolerance check the labelling for a 'may contain gluten' or gluten free statement to determine its suitability. There are also individuals who have an allergy to cereals and will need to know what cereal has been used, for example wheat.

Sesame seeds

Sesame seeds can be known as gingelly and are often used on bread and breadsticks. Sesame paste (tahini) is used in some Greek and Turkish dishes, including hummus. Watch out for sesame oil used for cooking or in dressings.
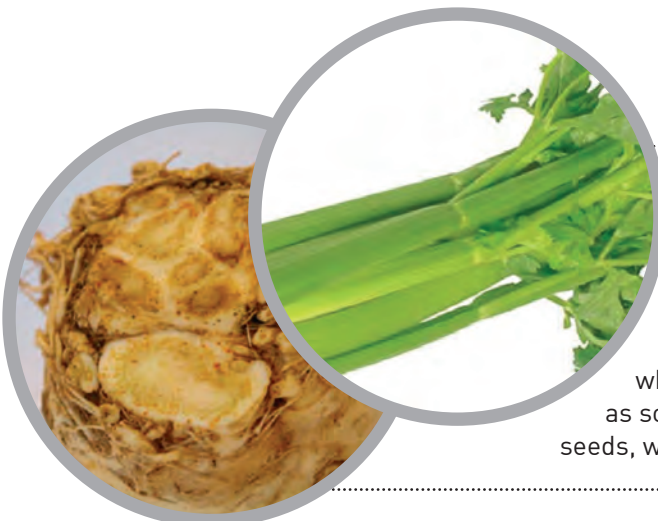
Celery/Celeriac

People who are allergic to celery can also react to celeriac. Celeriac and celery are sometimes used as an ingredient in stock cubes, salads and soups, or served as a vegetable. Watch out for celery salt, which is used as a seasoning in lots of foods, such as soups and meat products. Also look out for celery seeds, which are used as a spice.

Mustard

People who are allergic to mustard will react to any food that comes from the mustard plant, including liquid mustard, mustard powder, the leaves, seeds and flowers, and sprouted mustard seeds. Mustard is sometimes used in salad dressings, marinades, soups, sauces, spice mixes, curries, seeded breads and meat products.

Lupin

The major allergens in lupin are also found in peanuts, so people who are allergic to peanuts could react to lupin. Lupin is mainly used in flour-based products such as pastry and pasta. People with peanut allergy should avoid foods containing lupin.

Sulphur dioxide and Sulphites

For some people with asthma, sulphur dioxide can trigger an asthmatic response. Sulphur dioxide and sulphites (E220-E228) are used as preservatives in a wide range of foods, particularly meat products such as sausages, soft drinks, and dried fruit and vegetables. Sulphur dioxide is also found in wine and beer.

Controlling Allergens In Your Business

> **It is important to know what to do if you serve a customer who has a food allergy, because these allergies can kill. If someone has a severe allergy, they can react to even a tiny amount of the food they are sensitive to.**

Staff knowledge and customer information

To begin with it is important that all staff in the business have received training on the types of foods listed above that can cause allergies. Customers should be informed to alert staff if they have allergies to any foods. This can be achieved by putting up notices and by placing messages on menus to encourage customers at risk to ask about foods.

Customers can also be informed of the presence of allergens by detailing them clearly on the menu. Information on allergens can be provided in the name or description of the food item in the menu, e.g. chocolate and almond slice, sesame oil dressing. Remember to update the menu when recipes change. This allows people with food allergies to spot that dishes contain certain foods.

> **Staff should know how to deal with enquiries about ingredients and possible allergen contamination and tell the truth when asked. If someone asks if a dish contains a certain food, check all the ingredients in the dish (and what they contain), as well as what you use to cook the dish, thicken a sauce or make a garnish or salad dressing. Always read labels and other information. Never guess. If you can't be sure that the dish doesn't contain the food in question, tell the customer and let them make their own mindup as to whether to purchase the food.**

Checking ingredients

It is important to check food labels and supplier information for the presence of allergens in ingredients used to prepare dishes. This will be necessary when writing menus so that the presence of allergens in certain dishes can be clearly displayed. Keep a copy of the ingredient information of any ready-made foods you use. This is so you can check what is in them. Make sure the staff know where to access this information and that it is kept up to date.

If someone asks if a dish contains a certain food, check all the ingredients in the dish (and what they contain), as well as what you use to cook the dish, thicken a sauce and to make a garnish or salad dressing. **NEVER GUESS**. If you can't be sure that the dish doesn't contain the food in question, tell the customer and let them make their own mind up as to whether to purchase the food.

How to prepare/serve allergen free food

When you have been asked to prepare a dish that doesn't 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. This is to prevent small amounts of the food that a person is allergic to getting into the dish accidentally.

What to do if things go wrong

If you think a customer is having a severe allergic reaction:
- **Do not move them because this could make them worse. If they feel faint or dizzy, they should lie down.**
- **Ring 999 for an ambulance immediately and describe what is happening.**
- **Explain that your customer could have anaphylaxis (pronounced 'anna-fill-axis').**
- **Send someone outside to wait for the ambulance and stay with your customer until help arrives.**

How to stop this happening again

- **If you or your staff are not sure if there is a trace of life threatening ingredient in a meal, then say so – never guess.**

- Make sure that all your staff understand how important it is to check all the contents of a dish if they are asked by someone who has a food allergy.

- Make sure you keep ingredient information for all ready-made products and that staff know to check this.

- Make sure that when staff prepare a dish for someone with a food allergy they are cleaning effectively first and using clean equipment.

- Improve the descriptions on your menu.

- **Train all staff, whether they are going to work in the kitchen or serve customers, about food allergy so they know to take it seriously and know how to deal with consumer queries.**

- Alert customers to inform staff if they have allergies to any foods.

- Improve supervision and communication.

For further information on food allergies visit:

www.food.gov.uk/allergen-resources

www.fsai.ie

www.anaphylaxis.org.uk

Acrylamide

Mitigation Measures applied by the Food Business

Please complete the tables below and tick only the relevant mitigation measures adopted by you to ensure the levels of acrylamide in food are as low as reasonably achievable.

Potato products made from fresh potatoes (e.g. chips, French fries, other cut (deep-fried) and sliced potato crisps)	Please tick the mitigation measures applied by your business
Ask your potato provider for advice on the best variety to use for the type of cooking you are doing and pick suitable varieties with lower sugar content.	☐ I do this
Store raw, unpeeled potatoes in a cool, dark place, above 6°C.	☐ I do this
Follow manufacturer's cooking instructions for frozen potato products.	☐ I do this
Where possible, when making home-made chips, or cut potatoes that are going to be deep-fried, follow one of these steps: Wash and soak for 30 - 120 minutes (2 hours) in cold water and rinse in clean water before frying.	☐ I do this
Or Soak for a few minutes in warm water and rinse in clean water before frying.	☐ I do this
Or Blanch potatoes before frying.	☐ I do this
Consult your cooking oil provider and select frying fats and oils that allow quicker frying and/or lower temperatures.	☐ I do this
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°C.	☐ I do this
Maintain frying oil and fats quality by frequently removing crumbs and debris from the fryer.	☐ I do this
Use and display a colour guide on the optimal colour for minimising acrylamide (e.g. golden yellow or lighter) Colour charts for fries can be found at: http://goodfries.eu/en/	☐ I do this

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Bread & bakery products (e.g. cookies, biscuits and scones)

Please tick the mitigation measures applied by your business

Extend the fermentation time of yeast where possible and compatible with the production process and hygiene requirements.

☐ I do this

Reduce the oven temperature and extend the cooking time where possible and compatible with the production process and food safety requirements.

☐ I do this

Toasted sandwiches

Please tick the mitigation measures applied by your business

Ensure sandwiches are toasted to the lightest colour level acceptable (e.g. golden yellow or lighter)

This can be achieved using a colour guide.

☐ I do this

Advice on Acrylamide Control

Acrylamide is a chemical formed when certain foods are cooked at high temperatures such as frying, baking and toasting. Legislation is in place to reduce acrylamide levels in food, as it has the potential to cause cancer.

Acrylamide is formed in a wide range of foods including chips, roast potatoes, crisps, toast, cakes, biscuits, cereals and coffee.

Potato products made from fresh potatoes e.g. chips, French fries, other cut (deep-fried) and sliced potato crisps

Certain potato varieties are lower in natural sugars and using these will help to keep acrylamide levels lower. Frying at high temperatures can result in the formation of acrylamide. You should select frying oils/fats which allow quicker frying times and/or at lower temperatures.
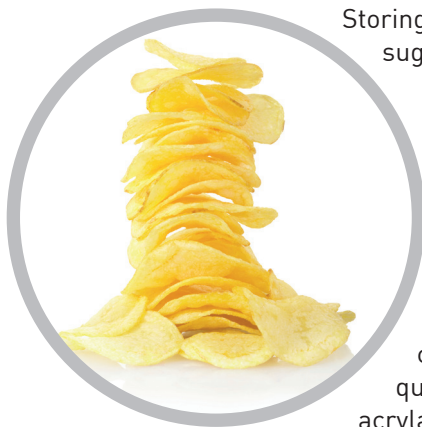
Storing unpeeled potatoes above 6°C helps minimise the formation of natural sugars and therefore reduces acrylamide when cooked at high temperatures.

Washing and soaking or blanching potatoes before frying helps remove excess sugars and therefore reduces acrylamide.

Manufacturer's instructions should be followed for frozen/processed products. Frying below 175°C to golden yellow or lighter will minimise levels of acrylamide.

Skimming fryers frequently to remove crumbs and food debris will maintain oil quality for longer and help minimise acrylamide formation.

Bread and bakery products (e.g. cookies, biscuits and scones)

The following will help reduce the formation of acrylamide:

- Extend yeast formation
- Reduce oven temperature and extend baking time

Toasted sandwiches

Toasting sandwiches to the golden yellow or lighter will minimise acrylamide formation.

Further information:

www.food.gov.uk/safety-hygiene/acrylamide

This section covers the hygiene requirements which must be addressed by every food business. Indicate by ticking the boxes below that you have read and continuously implement each requirement as appropriate to your food business and instruct/train your staff accordingly.

Cleaning
(Pages 2 – 10)

Maintenance
(Pages 16 – 17)

Pest Control
(Pages 11 – 14)

Personal Hygiene
(Pages 18 – 21)

Waste Control
(Page 15)

Training/Supervision
(Pages 22 – 23)

This secion also includes:
Advice on using a probe thermometer
(Pages 24 – 26)

SAFE CATERING

Cleaning

Why is cleaning and disinfection so important?

Cleaning and disinfection of food premises is important for a number of reasons:

- **To prevent food poisoning – proper cleaning and disinfection will reduce food poisoning bacteria to a safe level and will help to reduce the risk of cross-contamination.**

- **To remove undesirable physical materials which may contaminate food.**

What needs to be cleaned and disinfected?

All equipment and areas within food premises are required to be kept clean. Equipment and surfaces which are likely to come into contact with food either directly or indirectly also require to be thoroughly disinfected. These include:

- **Equipment and surfaces which come into contact with food**, for example, work surfaces, chopping boards, shelving, crockery, utensils, food storage containers, pots and cutlery.
- **Surfaces which may not come into contact with food directly**, for example, worktops and walls, which may be subject to splashes.
- **Equipment which may not come into contact with food directly**, for example, sinks, wash hand basins, taps, and items that people touch frequently such as fridge/freezer door handles, switches, phones, cash registers, etc, which may present a cross-contamination risk if shared by staff handling raw and ready-to-eat foods. Regularly wash/wipe and disinfect items that people touch frequently such as door handles, switches and can openers.

It is important to clean fridges at a time when they do not contain much food. Transfer food to another fridge or safe cold area and keep it covered.

Pay particular attention to how often you clean pieces of equipment that have moving parts. These can be more difficult to clean, but it is important to clean equipment properly to stop bacteria and dirt building up.

If you have manufacturer's cleaning instructions for a piece of equipment, follow these. The instructions will tell you how to clean this particular piece of equipment thoroughly.

Food waste containers, refuse waste bins and all waste storage areas should be cleaned regularly.

When you are cleaning, remember to move food out of the way, or cover it. This is to prevent dirt, bacteria or cleaning chemicals from getting into food.

It is not likely that floors, walls, ceilings and extraction canopies would require disinfection unless there is a risk of food contamination, but thorough cleaning and degreasing is required. Ovens use high temperatures and are therefore unlikely to require disinfection.

How to clean and disinfect

Before you start to clean it is a good idea to move food out of the way or cover it to prevent dirt, bacteria or cleaning chemicals from getting on to the food. Proper cleaning requires two stages;

Stage 1: General cleaning using a detergent

The first stage is a general clean of the surface or equipment using a suitable detergent to remove visible dirt, food particles, grease and debris. This stage should always be completed by rinsing to ensure thorough removal of all residues from the surface prior to stage two.
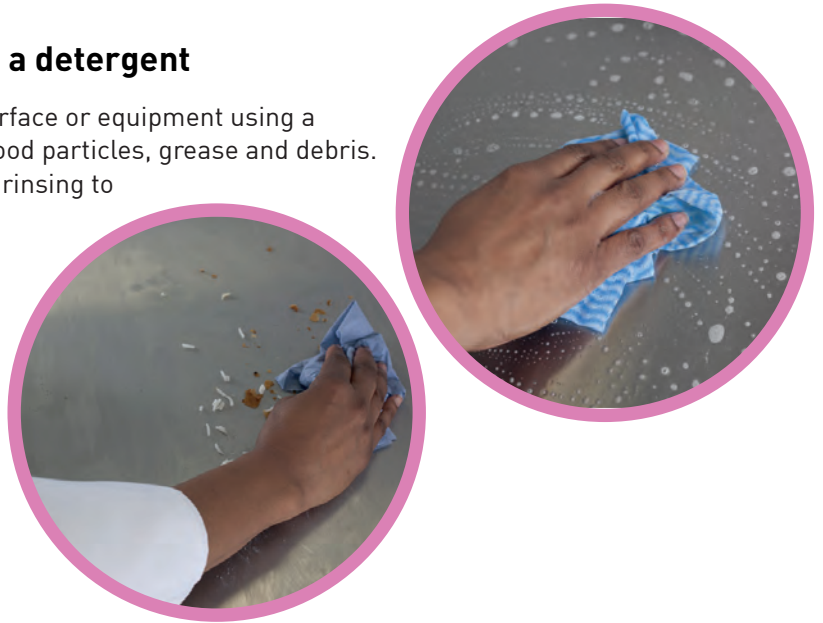
Stage 2: Disinfection

The second stage is the disinfection stage to ensure that any bacteria present are reduced to an acceptable level. The disinfectant used should comply with the BS EN standards set down in this guide (page 4). It is important to remember that disinfection is only effective when carried out on clean surfaces. As with the first stage, disinfection should be followed with a final rinse with clean water unless the disinfectant is a non rinse formula.

Disinfection can be achieved using heat or using chemical methods.

Disinfection Using Heat

Dishwashers wash items thoroughly at a high temperature so this is one of the most reliable ways to clean equipment and kill harmful bacteria such as E.coli O157.

The dishwasher should be maintained in good working order, serviced regularly and used in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions. The manufacturer's cleaning and maintenance instructions must be followed and instructions typically include the removal of food debris, plastic wrapping and limescale from the water jets, filters and drains, as well as carrying out regular cleaning.

Steam cleaning and use of sterilising sinks can also be effective methods for disinfecting using heat in some circumstances but should be used with care due to the high temperatures reached.

Disinfection using heat is the safest method for disinfecting utensils and equipment (except complex equipment – Section 3, page 25) which are used for both raw and ready-to-eat food. Where an acceptable method of heat disinfection is not available, separate utensils and equipment should be provided and maintained for use with ready-to-eat food only.

Disinfection Using Chemicals

There are several different chemicals that can be used for general cleaning and disinfection. It is very important to understand the differences between each of these to make sure they are used properly. The following summarises the purpose of each:

Detergent/Degreaser

A chemical (e.g. washing-up liquid) used to remove grease, dirt and food. A detergent will not reduce the level of harmful bacteria such as E.coli O157 to an acceptable level and should only be used for general cleaning.

Disinfectant

A chemical that kills harmful bacteria and reduces them to an acceptable level when applied to a visibly clean surface at a specified dilution and contact time. (Check that surfaces are clean of grease, dirt and food before you use a disinfectant.)

Sanitiser

A two-in-one product that acts as a detergent and a disinfectant. This means that the same product can be used to provide a visibly clean surface but it must be used a second time in order to disinfect the surface.

Important things to consider when using cleaning chemicals

Dilution rate

Most cleaning chemicals are concentrated, so you need to add water to dilute them before they can be used. It is important to follow the manufacturer's instructions on how much water to use with the chemical. This is the 'dilution rate'. If you add too much water then the cleaning chemical might not work effectively. Too little water may result in chemical contamination.

Contact time

This is how long a cleaning chemical needs to be left on the item you are cleaning. **It is important to follow the manufacturer's instructions on contact time for the chemical to work effectively.**

Final Rinse

Disinfection should be followed by a final rinse of the surface or equipment with clean water to remove any remaining chemical, unless it is formulated fo use without a final rinse.

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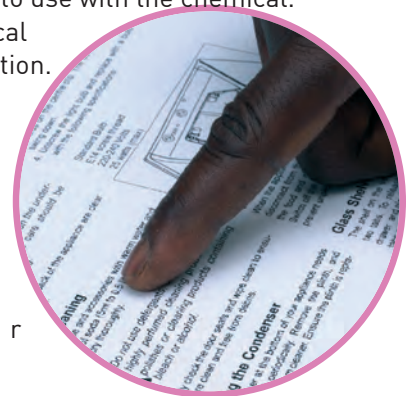
> **When disinfection has taken place, extra care must be taken to make sure that the equipment/surfaces etc are not re-contaminated by raw foods.**

Standards for disinfectants and sanitisers

There are two recognised standards which indicate that a disinfectant or sanitiser is effective at killing food poisoning bacteria such as E.coli O157, these are:

BS EN 1276:1997 (now replaced by BS EN 1276:2009)
BS EN 13697:2001

You should check that your disinfectant/sanitising products meet these standards by checking the label of the product or confirming this with your supplier.

It is recommended that every business should maintain an up to date list of chemicals that they use, what they are used for, dilution rates and contact times. This may be part of the cleaning schedule or may be kept separately.

Additional disinfection considerations

Where a dishwasher is not available and no other suitable method of heat disinfection is available, separate equipment and utensils should be provided for use with ready-to-eat food only and should not be used with raw food. The equipment and utensils should also be washed separately. This means that the washing process will have to be carefully managed as follows;

1. The utensils and equipment used with ready-to-eat food should be washed and disinfected in the sink first and then removed to the clean area to avoid re-contamination.

2. The utensils and equipment used with raw foods may then be thoroughly washed and disinfected.

3. The sink and fittings should be thoroughly cleaned and disinfected between uses.

Always remember: items of complex equipment (Section 3, page 25) **should not** be used for both raw and ready-to-eat food.

Cleaning Materials

Separate cleaning materials such as cloths, wipes and sponges should be provided for use in clean areas where ready-to-eat food is prepared. They should be stored in the clean area and not used in raw food areas.

Cloths

Cloths can be one of the main causes of cross-contamination in the kitchen. It is essential to use them safely to prevent bacteria such as E.coli 0157 from spreading.

When cleaning, follow these steps to prevent the spread of bacteria:

• Use disposable, single use cloths wherever possible and throw them away after each task.

• Provide separate cloths for use in the clean area to wipe work surfaces that will be used with ready-to-eat food. 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. It is a good idea to make these colour coded to make them easy to identify. When cloths are reusable they should be laundered in a boil wash (typically 90°C.) Reusable cloths should be thoroughly washed, disinfected and dried between tasks and not just when they look dirty.

• Where laundry is done by an external company, check to make sure that lower wash temperatures are not used for energy efficiency.

• Using dirty cloths can spread bacteria very easily. It is recommended that you have a designated place for dirty re-usable cloths to prevent them being reused before they have been washed.

• Always keep a good supply of disposable/clean cloths in your kitchen. Staff are more likely to use clean cloths if plenty are available.

Keeping Your Kitchen Clear And Clean

Take off outer packaging and throw it away before you bring food into the kitchen or storeroom. Outer packaging could have touched dirty floors etc. during storage or transportation.

Take extra care with how you throw away packaging and food waste from raw meat/poultry/fish, eggs and unprepared fruit/vegetables. Packaging and food waste from these foods are more likely to spread food poisoning bacteria to food and surfaces.

It is important to clear away used equipment to prevent bacteria spreading from it to surfaces of food. Also work surfaces are easier to keep clean when they are not cluttered.

> **Wash or wipe away spills as soon as they happen. Disinfect work surfaces after wiping up spills from raw meat/poultry/fish, eggs or unprepared fruit/vegetables. This stops dirt building up and helps prevent bacteria from spreading.**

Training and instruction

It is essential that staff carrying out cleaning and disinfection activities follow effective cleaning and disinfection procedures. Staff should be trained in effective methods of cleaning, storage and proper use of cleaning chemicals, what action to take if a lapse in cleaning has taken place. Where necessary ensure that correct measuring containers are provided for making up dilutions of chemicals in accordance with manufacturer's instructions for proper use.

> **Chemicals should always be obtained from reputable suppliers and used in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions.**
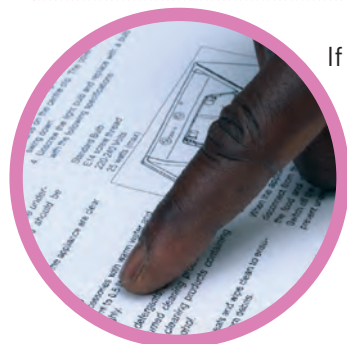
If you have manufacturer's cleaning instructions for a piece of equipment, follow these. The instructions will tell you how to clean this particular piece of equipment thoroughly.

Cleaning Schedules

If cleaning is to be effective then it needs to be planned. A cleaning schedule is a useful tool to help you clean effectively in your business. You can use the cleaning schedule and cleaning record sheets in this guide, to write down how you clean in your business and to make a record that cleaning is happening. It is important to write down how you do your cleaning, so you can show what you do. It is also useful for staff to be able to check how they should clean things, so you may wish to put your cleaning schedule on the wall.

Although cleaning schedules are useful tools to ensure routine and in depth cleaning takes place it is also important to clean and clear as you go.

How to use the cleaning schedule in this guide

The cleaning schedule is to be used to keep a record of all the equipment, fixtures and fittings that need to be cleaned in your premises and to record how they should be cleaned. This schedule is completed once (but reviewed periodically to ensure that it is still up to date). It is suggested that once the schedule is completed it is posted in a conspicuous place so that all your staff can easily see what needs cleaned and how often. It may also be used to record that cleaning has been carried out.

Completing the cleaning schedule

1. In order to complete the cleaning schedule, it is recommended that you walk through your premises and make a list of everything that needs cleaning. This will depend on what you do in your business. You may find it helpful to go through the following examples.

Items that come into direct contact with food;	
Items that need cleaning and disinfecting	Worksurfaces Food equipment and utensils, e.g. knives, chopping boards Fridges and freezers Equipment with moving parts, e.g. food mixers, meat slicers Sinks Re-usable cloths and work clothes
Frequently touched items	Rubbish bins, broom and mop handles Door and equipment handles, taps, switches and controls Can openers, telephones Cash registers
Other cleaning	Floors, walls, ceilings Storage areas Waste areas and drains Staff areas Food equipment that may be subject to food splashes e.g. ovens, microwaves, display cabinets.

2. List all surfaces and equipment that needs to be cleaned in the item column of the schedule. You will then need to detail against each item (or group of items) how they should be cleaned. This will include:

- How often you clean the item(s)

- Any precautions that your staff should take when cleaning, e.g. should they wear gloves or goggles

- How you clean the item(s) and what equipment you use

- What chemicals you use and how to use them

- The person(s) responsible for cleaning.

3. Review your schedule regularly and check that all cleaning is done properly. Train staff on the cleaning schedule, so they know what they have to do, and when. Supervise cleaning.

It is recommended that the cleaning schedule is posted in a prominent position in your premises, in a position that all staff can view.

Completing the cleaning record sheet

All areas/equipment listed in your cleaning schedule should be detailed in the first column of the cleaning record sheet on page 10 of this section. Staff should then sign that they have completed cleaning it. You can therefore check, for example at the end of the day, that all areas as detailed in your schedule have been cleaned. It is also advised that you check the adequacy of cleaning to ensure the job has been completed satisfactorily.

Cleaning Schedule Example of a cleaning schedule:

Item	Frequency of cleaning					Precautions e.g. wear gloves or goggles	Method of cleaning	Chemical(s) used (include dilution required)	Person Responsible
	After Use	Every shift	Daily	Weekly	Other				
Work surface	X						1. Remove any obvious food and dirt. 2. Wash the surface with hot soapy water (detergent diluted according to manufacturer's instructions) to remove grease and any other food and dirt. 3. Rinse with clean water to remove the detergent and loosened food and dirt. 4. Apply a disinfectant. Make sure you leave it on for the contact time recommended by the manufacturer. 5. Rinse with clean water to remove the disinfectant. 6. Leave to dry naturally or use a clean disposable cloth.	X Brand detergent diluted 4:1 Y Brand disinfectant diluted 4:1	
Food mixer	X						1. Turn off power supply, disconnect lead. 2. Scrape off food and rinse. 3. Wash thoroughly with hot, soapy water and rinse with clean water. 4. Apply disinfectant, following the manufacturer's instructions and rinse. 5. Pay particular attention to corners and crevices. 6. Leave to dry before switching back on.	X Brand detergent diluted 4:1 Y Brand disinfectant diluted 4:1	
Slicing machine	X					Trained staff members only. Use blade guards and gloves.	1. Turn off power supply, disconnect lead. 2. Scrape off food and rinse. 3. Take apart and wash thoroughly in hot water and detergent. 4. Apply disinfectant. Make sure you leave it on for the contact time recommended by the manufacturer. 5. Leave to dry or use a clean disposable cloth.	X Brand detergent diluted 4:1 Y Brand disinfectant diluted 4:1	

Blank Cleaning Schedule

Item	Frequency of cleaning					Precautions e.g. wear gloves or goggles	Method of cleaning	Chemical(s) used (include dilution required)	Person Responsible
	After Use	Every shift	Daily	Weekly	Other				

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Cleaning Record Sheet

EQUIPMENT AREA	MONDAY		TUESDAY		WEDNESDAY		THURSDAY		FRIDAY		SATURDAY		SUNDAY	
	Time	Initials	Time	Initials	Time	Initials	Time	Initials	Time	Initials	Time	Initials	Time	Initials

Checked/verified on	/	/	/	/	/	/	/
Initials							

Pest Control

Why Is Pest Control Important?

Pest control is important because pests can carry food poisoning bacteria that can contaminate foods and cause illness or food spoilage. These food poisoning bacteria can be passed to the food by contact with their hair, faeces and urine. Pests can also cost thousands of pounds worth of damage to food businesses and their reputations.

Common Pests

Generally speaking pests are animals, birds or insects that contaminate food either directly or

indirectly. They include:

Rodents, e.g. rats and mice

Signs:
Small footprints in dust, droppings, holes in walls and doors, nests, gnawed goods or packaging, grease or smear marks, urine stains on food packaging.
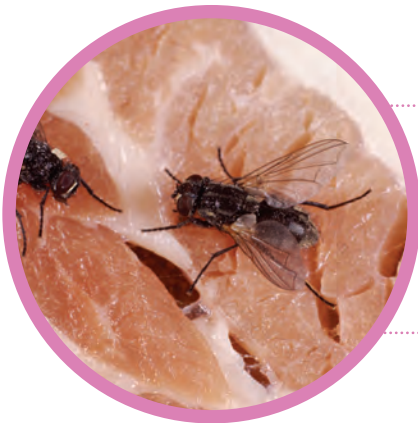
Flies and flying insects

Signs:
Bodies of insects, live insects, webbing, nests, droning or buzzing, maggots.

Cockroaches

Signs:
Eggs and egg cases, moulted 'skins', the insects themselves, droppings.

Ants

Signs:
Small piles of sand or soil, the insects themselves, flying ants on hot days.

Birds

Signs:
Feathers, droppings, nests, noise, the birds themselves.

Beetles and weevils

Signs:
Moving insects, particularly in dry food, small maggots.

Hazards associated with pests

Contamination of food by:

- Bacteria from pests and their droppings.

- Pests' bodies, eggs, hairs, droppings, etc.

- Chemicals e.g. careless use of pest control bait.

Control Measures

1. Pest proofing of the premises

The building must be in good condition and repair in order to restrict pest access and prevent potential breeding sites. This can be done by:

- Using wire mesh screens to pest proof air vents.

- Sealing holes, and other places where pests can gain access.

- Keeping the floors, walls, roof, doors and window openings in a good state of repair with no gaps or spaces to prevent the entry of pests.

- Fitting drain covers to prevent pests gaining access.

2. Insects screens

- It is recommended that windows opening directly into food preparation areas should be fitted with screens capable of resisting common flying insects (ideally apertures should be of 2mm² or less).

- Screens must be removable to allow for cleaning.

- Kitchen doors which open to the outside air and which are opened for lengthy periods may also be suitably screened using a close-fitting insect-proof screen door.

3. Electronic Fly-Killing devices

- Flying insects can be destroyed using an electronic fly-killing device. Manufacturers will give advice on the location, cleaning and maintenance of this equipment.

- Change bulbs annually.

4. Good housekeeping

- Check deliveries thoroughly. Inspect stock on delivery to make sure that there are no visible signs of damage by pests. Do not accept a delivery if it shows signs of pests such as gnawed packaging or insects, e.g. beetles.

- Premises and refuse stores must be managed in such a way as to enable them to be kept clean, and protected against access by pests.

- Foods which are awaiting preparation or are being defrosted or are cooling should be kept suitably covered.

- Food waste should be removed regularly from areas where it is produced or placed in containers with lids.

- Food should be stored off the floor and away from walls.

- Food should, where possible, be stored in rodent-proof containers.

- Keep external areas tidy and free from weeds. Make sure bins have close fitting lids and are easy to clean.

5. Pest control contractor

- Some businesses may decide to employ a pest control company to monitor the premises on a regular basis. It is highly recommended that a reputable pest control company is used, for example, one who is a member of the British Pest Control Association.

- A pest control contract should include checking for the presence of all pests, monitor the pest proofing of the premises and the eradication of any infestations found.

- A reputable pest control company should provide advice on housekeeping and storage arrangements to prevent access by pests.

- The contractor should be able to provide a 24 hour emergency cover and should provide a written report after each visit. It is recommended that any pest contractor report is kept as part of your documentation.

6. Checking and inspection

- All areas of the food premises should be checked regularly for signs of pests such as rodent droppings, smear marks, insect egg cases and dead insects.

- Staff should be made aware of the signs of pests and what action they must take should they discover pests or signs of pests.

- Management must take immediate and appropriate action to control any infestation of pests identified on their premises.

- Foods should be checked for the presence of pests, for example, insects within cereals/grains.

Steps to be taken if you discover a pest control problem in your premises

- Contact a pest contractor immediately.

- Contact your local Environmental Health Officer.

- If you think any equipment, surfaces or utensils have been touched by pests, they should be washed, disinfected and dried to stop food poisoning bacteria from spreading.

- If you think food has been touched by pests in any way, throw it away.

- Find out the cause of the infestation and ensure that it does not recur.

- Repair any structural defects immediately.

- Make your pest checks more frequent.

- Improve staff training on recognising signs of pests and encourage them to report problems immediately.

- **If you have persistent problems with pests, consider using the regular services of a pest contractor, if you do not have one already.**

Waste Control

Why is waste control important?

Waste can be regarded as any item of food, ingredients, packaging materials or even soiled cleaning cloths which are not suitable for further use and which are intended to be discarded.

> **Waste presents a risk of physical contamination to food and may attract pests. Additionally, food that is damaged, out of date or rotting may present a risk of cross contamination to other foods from food poisoning bacteria.**

How can waste be controlled?

Waste in food rooms
- Food waste and other waste must be removed frequently from the food handling areas.

- Sufficient containers should be provided and placed conveniently where the waste occurs.

- Pedal operated bins are recommended to avoid touching lids.

Waste awaiting collection
- Containers used for the storage of waste awaiting collection should have a fitted lid and should be easy to clean and disinfect.

- Waste stores must be designed and managed in such a way as to enable them to be kept clean, and protected against pests (refer to the Pest Control guidance, page 11). Waste stores should, ideally, be located away from food storage and handling areas and from the main delivery entrance as they may encourage flies.

- Other waste such as cardboard and paper need not be placed in a sealed container but must be kept separate from food and must be stored in such a way that it does not pose a risk of contamination.

Waste disposal
It is your responsibility to ensure that all waste is disposed of properly in accordance with relevant legislation.

Maintenance

Why is maintenance important?

Effective Maintenance is essential to allow you to clean properly and keep pests out. A lack of maintenance can also result in defective and poorly maintained equipment resulting in physical contamination of food. Poorly maintained equipment such as chilling equipment and cooking equipment could result in inadequate temperature control causing unsafe food to be produced. Check your premises regularly for any structural damage or problems with equipment.

What needs to be maintained?

Premises structure

- All internal surfaces must be smooth, impervious, easy to clean and in a good state of repair. Maintaining the structure in good repair makes it easier to effectively clean the premises.

- Repair structural damage as soon as it happens e.g. damp/chipped plaster, broken tiles, holes in walls or windows.

- To prevent the entry of pests, the floors, walls, roofs, doors and window openings must be kept in a good state of repair with no gaps or spaces.

- Drains should be kept free of leaks and blockages.

Equipment

- All food contact surfaces and equipment must be maintained in good condition to enable effective cleaning and disinfection, and to prevent the build up of debris. Repair or replace any equipment or utensils that are damaged or have loose parts. Dirt and food poisoning bacteria can collect in damaged equipment/utensils. Loose parts may fall into food.

  - Throw away any cracked or chipped dishes and other tableware. Dirt and food poisoning bacteria can collect in cracks or chips.

- Replace chopping boards that are scratched, pitted or scored. Dirt and food poisoning bacteria can collect in any areas where the board is not smooth.

  - Broken or defective light bulbs, tubes and fittings should be replaced promptly.

    - Certain equipment may require to be serviced at regular intervals, for example, cooking equipment, hot holding equipment, refrigerators and freezers, dishwashers and ventilation systems/ducting.

  - Check extractor fans and filters regularly to make sure they are working properly and are free from grease and dirt. This is to make sure the fans and filters can do their job properly.

- Regularly check door seals on refrigeration and cooking equipment.

Water Supply

You must ensure that there is an adequate supply of potable water. If your water supply is from a private source e.g. spring, well or borehole, you must ensure that it is maintained and tested in accordance with drinking water legislation.

What to do if things go wrong

- **If you think that equipment might not be working properly, check it straight away. Do not wait until it has broken down. Check that staff are using the equipment properly.**

- **Look at the manufacturer's instructions to see if there is a troubleshooting section.**

- **Contact the equipment manufacturer or your maintenance contractor, if you have one.**

- **Use alternative equipment until the fault has been corrected.**

- **Put problems right as soon as possible, before they get worse or affect food safety.**

How to stop this happening again

- Make your maintenance checks more frequent.

- Encourage staff to report any structural damage or problems with equipment, so you know about problems early.

- Improve staff supervision and training.

Personal Hygiene

Why personal hygiene is important

It is vital for staff to follow good personal hygiene practices to help prevent bacteria from spreading to food. The Law requires that every person working in a food handling area maintains a high degree of personal cleanliness and wears suitable clean and, where necessary, protective clothing.

General advice

- Staff must always wash their **hands** before preparing food as it is one of the best ways to prevent food poisoning bacteria from spreading.

- All staff must wear **clean work 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.

- Ideally, work clothes should be **light-coloured** (to show any dirt) with no external pockets. This helps to stop hairs, fibres and the contents of pockets getting into food.

- It is good practice for staff to wear clean or disposable **aprons** over their work clothes, especially when working with raw meat/poultry/fish, eggs or unprepared 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.

- Any contaminated protective clothing worn while preparing raw food (e.g. aprons and overalls) should be changed before handling ready–to-eat food or entering a clean area.

- It is good practice for staff to keep **hair** tied back and wear a hat or hairnet 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.

- Food poisoning bacteria can be spread from someone's face or mouth to their hands and then onto food. 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.

- **Watches and jewellery** can collect and spread dirt and food poisoning bacteria, or fall in the food. Staff should not wear watches or jewellery when preparing food (except a plain wedding band).

- 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.

- It is good practice to keep a clean set of work clothes or disposable aprons for **visitors** e.g. maintenance personnel. Remember anyone entering the kitchen can bring in bacteria on their clothes.
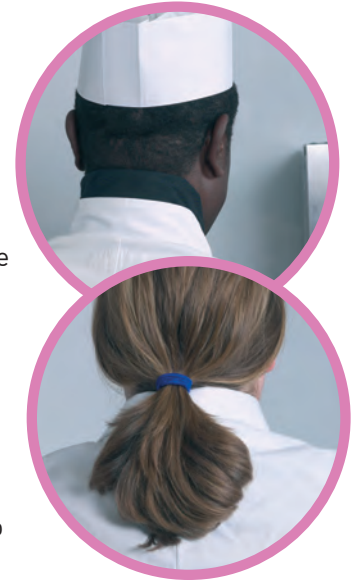
Handwashing

- Food poisoning bacteria can spread very easily from people's hands to food, work surfaces, equipment etc. Effective handwashing helps to prevent this. All staff who work with food should be trained in effective hand washing technique (page 19) to ensure they know how to wash their hands properly. **Use the laminated pull out illustration of effective handwashing technique supplied with this Safe Catering guide to display above the wash hand basin in your food premises.**

- Ensure that all staff who work with food use the effective handwashing technique:
    - When entering the kitchen, e.g. after a break or going to the toilet.
    - Before handling ready-to-eat foods.
    - After handling waste.
    - After touching raw meat/poultry/fish, eggs and unprepared fruit/vegetables.
    - After emptying bins.
    - After cleaning duties.
    - After eating, drinking, smoking or using a phone.
    - After touching a cut or changing a dressing.
    - After using the toilet.
    - After blowing nose, sneezing or coughing.

- Ensure that wash hand basins are convenient with plenty of hot water, soap and single use, disposable hand towels. Taps should be turned off using a paper towel to avoid re-contaminating hands.

- If you think a member of staff has not washed their hands when they should, make sure they wash them straight away and if there is a possibility that ready-to-eat food has become contaminated, throw it away. Emphasise how important it is to wash their hands when working with food. Increase staff supervision until you are satisfied that the staff member's hand washing practices have improved.

Effective Handwashing Technique

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

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

Hand Rubs and gels

- Hygienic hand rubs and gels can be used as an extra level of protection after hand washing has taken place but should not be used as a substitute for effective handwashing.

- When using hygienic hand rubs and gels it is recommended that they should meet standard BS EN 1500 set for hand rubs. This information should be available on the label of the product or can be obtained from the supplier or manufacturer.

Disposable gloves

Disposable gloves can be effective in helping to prevent the transfer of food poisoning bacteria onto food. The following needs to be taken into account when wearing gloves to prevent cross-contamination:

- Hands must be washed thoroughly before and after use.

- Gloves must be used only once. Change gloves between tasks e.g. after touching raw meat, poultry,fish, eggs, before touching ready-to-eat foods, after handling money, after emptying bins, after cleaning etc.

- Discard used gloves after each task.

Fitness to Work

What is Fitness to Work?

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 food poisoning bacteria to food.

> **Any member of staff who has diarrhoea and/or vomiting must by Law report it to their manager immediately. They may be asked to stay at home or go home straight away and consult their doctor. They may be given a different job which does not involve direct contact with food or working in areas where food is stored or handled. Staff should also tell their manager if they have any cuts or sores. People suffering from these symptoms often carry food poisoning bacteria on their hands and can spread them to food or equipment they touch.**

The Law puts the responsibility on employers to satisfy themselves that no food handlers pose a risk to food safety.

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.

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 food poisoning bacteria for 48 hours afterwards.

Cuts and sores should be completely covered with a brightly coloured waterproof dressing. This is to prevent bacteria from the cut or sore spreading to food.

The fitness of the food handler to work should be checked before they are employed or before they return to work after illness. It is recommended that an assessment is carried out for all existing employees. This can be done using form SC7, Section 5, page 9.

Further guidance on this subject is contained in the booklet "Food Handlers – Fitness to Work – Guidance for Food Business Operators", available from your local Environmental Health Officer, by contacting the Food Standards Agency in Northern Ireland, Email: infofsani@food.gov.uk Telephone 028 9041 7700, or on the Food Standards Agency website www.food.gov.uk.

Training/Supervision

You must make sure that staff are adequately supervised and instructed and/or trained in food hygiene to allow them to do their job safely. Those responsible for the food safety management procedures (e.g. this guide) should also be trained in their application. This Safe Catering guide is designed not only to help you to draw up your own food safety management procedures but it could also be used by you to instruct and train your staff.

The following structure is recommended:

- All food handlers should receive instruction on basic hygiene rules **before** starting work. See page 23.

- If you are using Safe Catering, you should instruct and train food handlers in each section of the pack that is relevant to the job they do in order to ensure that the relevant practices and procedures are followed.

- Managers or supervisors responsible for the development and maintenance of the food safety management procedures based upon Safe Catering must be adequately trained in their application. This would require them to have a sound working knowledge of Safe Catering.

- Staff involved in preparing high risk food, such as cooks and kitchen assistants, should be able to demonstrate the skills necessary to enable them to do their job safely **within three months** of their appointment.

The topics covered must as a minimum include the critical controls relevant to their work activity and may include some or all of the following:

- Basic food safety including causes and prevention of food poisoning.
- Food storage and importance of temperature control.
- Safe food preparation and handling practices including specific steps to reduce cross-contamination risks from E.coli O157.
- Personal hygiene and effective handwashing technique.
- Effective cleaning and disinfection methods.
- Pest control – preventive measures.

In order to achieve this, some businesses may wish to send their staff to formal Level 2 Award in Food Safety in Catering courses or to run equivalent formal courses in-house.

- You may also wish to consider training Staff who manage/supervise other food handlers to at least a Level 3 Award in Supervising Food Safety in Catering or to run equivalent formal courses in-house. Obtaining a qualification or attending formal training, provided either by an external training body or in-house, is not a legal requirement though many businesses may want their staff to follow this route. Adequate supervision and instruction/on the job training may meet food safety training requirements.

- Consider periodic refresher training for your staff as necessary.

It is recommended that you keep records of all staff training including instruction on Basic Hygiene Rules. Form SC6, is provided on page 8 of Section 5 to help you do this. You may wish to ask your local Environmental Health Officer for further information on food safety courses.

Basic Hygiene Rules

All new food handlers should be instructed in these basic rules <u>before</u> starting work for the first time:

- Keep yourself clean and wear clean clothing.

- Always wash and dry your hands thoroughly, using the effective hand washing technique, before handling ready-to-eat food, after using the toilet, after handling raw foods or waste, before starting work, after each break, after blowing your nose.

- Tell your supervisor before you handle food if you suffer from any skin, nose, throat, stomach or bowel trouble or an infected wound. You are breaking the Law if you do not. This is particularly important if returning to work following an illness.

- If you have to visit the doctor please remember to say you are a food handler.

- Tell your supervisor if anyone in your home is ill.

- Make sure cuts and sores are covered with a waterproof dressing which can be easily seen e.g. blue.

- Avoid unnecessary handling of food.

- Do not smoke, eat or drink in a food room, and never cough or sneeze over food.

- If you see something wrong – tell your supervisor.

- Do not prepare food too far in advance of service.

- Keep perishable food either refrigerated or piping hot.

- Keep the storage, preparation and display of raw and ready-to-eat food strictly separate.

- When reheating food make sure it gets piping hot all the way through.

- Clean as you go. Keep all equipment and surfaces clean and properly disinfected where necessary.

- Remember that disposable gloves can become contaminated in the same way hands can, so use with care.

- Follow any food safety instructions either on food packaging or from your supervisor.

Advice on using a Probe Thermometer

There are a range of hand-held thermometers that can be used when probing foods or checking air temperatures inside fridges and freezers. Dial thermometers may sometimes be used to test meat. Under no circumstances should a 'mercury in glass' thermometer be used as it would present a contamination risk if it breaks.

Types of Thermometers

Probe type	Where to use the probe	How to use the probe
Dial Thermometer	These are commonly used to test meat. Some are oven-safe and can be left in the meat while it cooks. Others are not oven-safe and are designed to be inserted when you have cooked the meat.	Clean the probe thoroughly and disinfect it before and after use in order to prevent cross-contamination. Insert it and leave it for up to two minutes before taking a reading.
Digital Probe Thermometer	These are generally easy to use and accurate. They can be used with lots of foods, but are not suitable for use in the oven.	Clean the probe thoroughly and disinfect it before and after use in order to prevent cross-contamination. Insert the probe. Wait for the display to stabilise before taking a reading.
Infrared Thermometer	These are quick and easy to use and can be useful when there are lots of temperatures to take. They will provide an accurate surface temperature of food but a probe thermometer is recommended to give an accurate core temperature reading.	Keep the thermometer clean and located in the clean area of the kitchen. Wash hands before use. Point the thermometer at the food and pull the trigger. Wait for the temperature reading to stabilise.
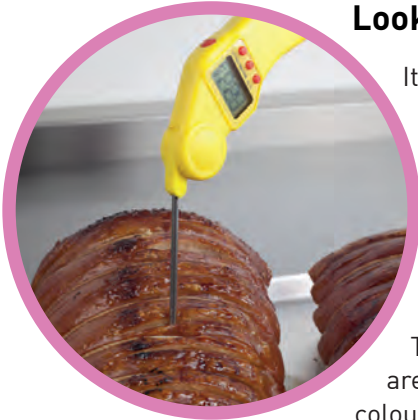
Looking after your probe

It is very important to keep the probe part of your thermometer clean, otherwise it could spread dirt and food poisoning bacteria to the food you are testing. Clean the probe thoroughly and disinfect it before and after you use it.

Always use a separate probe thermometer for checking the temperature of ready-to-eat food.

This should always be kept in the **clean** area of the kitchen. It is a good idea to colour code it to ensure it is easily identified during busy periods.

You need to look after your thermometer to prevent it from getting damaged and help keep it working properly. Do not leave a digital thermometer inside your fridge or freezer, or on hot surfaces. When you are not using it, store it safely. Keep it dry and away from extreme temperatures. Keep the thermometer in its case, if it has one and avoid banging or dropping it. If the battery is low, replace it immediately.

Checking your Thermometer

You should check your thermometer at least twice a year to ensure that it is accurate. The temperature readings of your thermometer should be recorded on the Thermometer Calibration Record overleaf. If you have more than one thermometer, each should be identified by a reference number.

When your local Environmental Health Officer visits, you may also ask them to check the temperature against their own thermometer.

Use the following procedures to carry out your own checks:

Low Temperature Check

Place tip of thermometer probe into crushed ice and a little cold water - leave for 5 minutes and then measure reading (should be between -1°C and +1°C)

High Temperature Check

Place tip of thermometer probe into the steam from a boiling kettle of water and record reading (should be between 99°C and 101°C)

If you find that your thermometer is faulty, either replace it or return it to the manufacturer/supplier. In this event a spare thermometer is required.

Thermometer Calibration Record

DATE	TEMPERATURES RECORDED		SIGNATURE	COMMENTS/ACTION
	COLD	HOT		

Manager/Supervisor check on	/ /	/ /	/ /	/ /	/ /

Recording Forms & Additional Resources

When using Safe Catering, it is essential that the outcomes of your checks / monitoring procedures are recorded at a frequency that reflects the nature and size of your business. Similarly, when checks / monitoring reveal that your procedures, have not been followed, you must also record what you have done about it (corrective actions). Recording helps you to keep an accurate check on food safety procedures within your business and enables you to demonstrate that you are controlling hazards in an effective manner.

What paperwork is needed?

Your monitoring checks may be recorded by using one or a combination of the following methods:

1. By using the Recording Forms provided in 'Safe Catering'.

2. By using Recording Forms which have been drawn up or adapted by yourself, either in paper copy or electronically.

Which of the Recording Forms provided in Safe Catering should be used?

The records provided in this manual, if correctly used, will help you to meet and support the requirements of a Food Safety Management Plan based on the HACCP principles and demonstrate it is working effectively.

When following Safe Catering the following Monitoring Records are provided and can be used:

Monitoring Record	Purpose
SC1 – Food Delivery Record	To record the monitoring of incoming deliveries
SC2 – Fridge/Cold room/Display Chill Temperature Records	To record the monitoring of the chill, refrigerator, cold display, units (and possibly the function of your freezer/s)
SC3 – Cooking/Cooling/Reheating Records	To record cooking, cooling and reheating temperatures
SC4 – Hot Hold/Display Records	To record hot holding temperatures
SC5 – Hygiene Inspection Checklist	To record your own checks of your premises
SC6 – Hygiene Training Records	To record training of your staff
SC7 – Fitness to Work Assessment Form	To record assessment of fitness to work
SC8 – All-in-one Record	To use as an alternative to SC1-4
SC9 – Customer Delivery Record	To record monitoring of food deliveries to customers

Copies of forms can be downloaded from www.food.gov.uk/business-guidance/safe-catering

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SC1 – Food Delivery Records

DATE	FOOD ITEM (High risk ready-to-eat foods only)	SUPPLIED BY	CHECK USE BY DATE	TEMP. * °C	COMMENTS/ACTION	SIGN

NOTE:: For large deliveries, monitor one or two food products from that delivery.
*Chilled food: max. 8°C; Hot Food: minimum 63°C

Manager/Supervisor check on	/	/	/	/	/	/
Initials						

SC2 – Fridge/Cold Room/Display Chill Temperature Records

Month:………………………………… Year:……………………………

UNIT													COMMENTS/ACTION	SIGNED
DATE	AM	**PM	AM	**PM	AM	**PM	AM	**PM	AM	**PM	AM	**PM		
1st														
2nd														
3rd														
4th														
5th														
6th														
7th														
8th														
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23rd														
24th														
25th														
26th														
27th														
28th														
29th														
30th														
31st														

TEMPERATURE OF FRIDGE/COLD ROOM/DISPLAY CHILL*
(insert name or number of units in shaded boxes)

NOTE: Temperature of food must not exceed 8˚C. *Some businesses may wish to record freezer temperatures. **It is recommended that fridge temperatures are checked at least once per day. Some businesses may wish to check fridges more frequently.

Manager/Supervisor check on	/ /	/ /	/ /	/ /	/ /
Initials					

SAFE CATERING

SC3 – Cooking/Cooling/Reheating Records

DATE	FOOD	COOKING*				COOLING*				REHEATING*				COMMENTS/ACTIONS
		TIME STARTED COOKING**	TIME FINISHED COOKING	CORE TEMP.	SIGN (initials)	DATE	TIME INTO FRIDGE/ BLAST CHILL/ FREEZER	SIGN (initials)		DATE	CORE TEMP.	SIGN (initials)		

NOTE: * Core temperature above 75˚C.
** It is not necessary to record the time started cooking, if the core temperature is checked.

Manager/Supervisor check on	/	/	/	/	/	/
Initials						

SC4 – Hot Hold/Display Records

(For food to be held hot for more than 2 hours)

DATE	FOOD	TIME INTO HOT HOLD	CORE TEMP* after 2 hrs on display	CORE TEMP* after 4 hrs on display	CORE TEMP* after 6 hrs on display	COMMENTS/ACTION	SIGNED

NOTE: *Keep hot food above 63°C

Manager/Supervisor check on	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/
Initials								

SAFE CATERING

SC5 – Hygiene Inspection Checklist

Simple checks of the premises which should be carried out by the Proprietor or Manager regularly*

	Satisfactory Yes	No	Details of Action Taken
Hygiene of Food Rooms & Equipment			
Are food rooms and equipment in good condition and well maintained?			
Are food rooms clean and tidy and do staff clean as they go including difficult areas?			
Is equipment easy to clean and kept in a clean condition?			
Are all food and hand contact surfaces e.g. work surfaces, slicers, fridge handles, probe thermometers, in good condition and cleaned/ disinfected regularly?			
Are suitable BS EN approved cleaning chemicals available and stored correctly and are proper cleaning methods used?			
Are separate cleaning cloths used in clean areas? If they are re-used are they laundered in a boil wash?			
Food Storage			
Are deliveries appropriately stored immediately?			
Is ready-to-eat food stored above/separate from raw food in the fridges and freezers?			
Is food in fridges/freezers covered?			
Are high risk foods date coded, codes checked daily and stock rotated?			
Are dried goods stored correctly e.g. in a suitable room, off the floor, in covered containers?			
Is outer packaging removed from ready-to-eat food before being placed into a *clean area?			
Are freezers working properly?			
Are fridges and freezers defrosted regularly?			
Food Handling Practices			
Are ready-to-eat foods prepared in separate clean areas?			
Are separate utensils and equipment used for ready-to-eat foods unless disinfected in a dishwasher? Is the dishwasher in good working order and regularly serviced?			
Is wrapping and packaging used for ready-to-eat food kept in the clean area?			
Do separate staff handle ready-to-eat food or are controls being followed to ensure staff change clothing and wash hands before handling ready-to-eat food.			
Is separate **complex equipment provided for ready-to-eat food and is it located in the clean area?			
Are staff handling food as little as possible? eg Using tongs			
If colour coded equipment is provided (e.g. utensils, chopping boards), is it correctly used?			
Are high risk foods prepared in small batches and placed in the fridge immediately after handling/preparation?			
Is food cooled as quickly as possible away from raw food and other sources of contamination?			
Are vegetables/fruit/salads/ trimmed and washed thoroughly before use unless labelled as 'ready-to-eat'?			
Are ready-to-eat foods kept separate on display and screened from customers?			
Are adequate clean utensils available for self service?			
Are frozen foods defrosted safely?			
Are controls in place to prevent contamination by chemicals/foreign bodies e.g. glass, packaging materials, bolts, rust, cleaning chemicals?			

	Satisfactory Yes	No	Details of Action Taken
Food Handling Practices continued			
Are staff aware of food allergy hazards?			
Are controls being followed to ensure staff wash hands after handing raw food and before touching surfaces, such as the cash register?			
Is a separate probe thermometer used for ready-to-eat foods and properly cleaned/disinfected before use?			
Personal Hygiene			
Are staff fit to work, wearing clean, suitable protective clothing and following personal hygiene rules particularly hand washing?			
Are wash hand basins clean with hot water, soap and hygienic hand drying facilities?			
Are wash hand basins used for hand washing only and is effective handwashing by staff regularly observed?			
Are staff toilets and changing facilities clean and tidy?			
Pest Control			
Are premises pest proofed and free from any signs of pests?			
Where necessary are external doors/ windows fitted with suitable flyscreens?			
Are insectocutors (if provided) properly maintained?			
Is food properly protected from risk of contamination by pests?			
Waste Control			
Is waste in food rooms stored correctly?			
Is food waste stored correctly outside and is the refuse area kept clean?			
Is unfit food clearly labelled and stored separately from other foods?			
Checks and Record Keeping			
Are all checks properly taken and recorded?			
Has appropriate corrective action been taken where necessary?			
Are record sheets up-to-date, checked and verified?			
Are equipment time/temperature combinations (page 44) regularly cross-checked?			
Review (4 weekly)			
Any new suppliers and approved list updated?			
Any new menu items and steps in Safe Catering updated?			
Any new food handling methods or equipment and steps in Safe Catering updated?			

*A **'clean area'** is a room or an area within the food premises where only ready-to-eat foods are handled. No raw foods can be handled here. The clean area might be fixed in the same location on a permanent basis or may be set up on a temporary basis following a thorough cleaning and disinfection process of the entire area. A temporary clean area should include clean storage facilities for storing equipment and packaging when the temporary clean area is not in use.

Complex equipment is the term given to those items of equipment that can be very difficult to clean. This may be because it is hard to access all parts of the equipment or because it is made up of a number of small parts and surfaces which may not be smooth or easy to clean. For these reasons complex equipment provided for use on ready-to-eat food should not be used for raw food.

Name:................................... **Position:**................................... **Signed:**................................... **Date:**...................

*Tick frequency checks carried out by proprietor or manager

Weekly ☐   **Fortnightly** ☐   **Monthly** ☐

SAFE CATERING

SC6 – Hygiene Training Record

Name:... Position:.................................... Date of employment:..................................

In House Training/Instruction on Safe Catering Pack

Nature of Training	Dates	Trainer	Employee Signature
Instruction On Basic Hygiene Rules (Sec 4, Page 23)			
Training on steps used in your business (Sec 3, Pages 5 – 78)			
Purchase, Delivery/Receipt, Collection			
Storage			
Preparation And Handling			
Cold Serve/Display			
Defrosting			
Cooking			
Cooling/Freezing			
Reheating			
Hot Hold/Display			
Transport and delivery			
Physical/Chemical Contamination			
Food Allergies			
Any other Step(s) e.g. vacuum packing			
Training on general hygiene requirements (Sec 4, Pages 2 – 21)			
Cleaning			
Pest Control			
Waste			
Maintenance			
Personal Hygiene			
Training			
Advice on using a Thermometer (pages 24 – 25)			

Further Training

Nature of training e.g. CIEH/RSH/RIPH level 2/3 Award in Food Safety in Catering, in-house, refresher	Course Provider	Date Completed	Employee Signature

Copies Of Any Certificates Should Be Kept With This Form

SAFE CATERING

SC7 – Fitness to work assessment form for use by employers

This form may be used for existing food handlers, for new food handlers on recruitment and for return of food handlers to work after illness.

NAME OF EMPLOYEE: .... **DATE OF ASSESSMENT:** ....

REASON FOR ASSESSMENT: (Tick Box)

Existing food handler

Pre-employment assessment

Return to work after illness

1. Have you suffered from diarrhoea and/or vomiting within the last 48 hours?   **YES/NO**
   If **no**, have you in the last 48 hours taken any medication to control diarrhoea and/or vomiting?   **YES/NO**

2. At present are you suffering from:
   i)   infected wounds, skin infections or sores?   **YES/NO**
   ii) boils, styes or septic fingers?   **YES/NO**
   iii) discharge from eye, ear or gums/mouth?   **YES/NO**

3. Have you ever had, or are you known to be a carrier of typhoid or paratyphoid?   **YES/NO**

4. In the last 21 days have you been in contact with anyone, at home or abroad,
   who may have been suffering from typhoid or paratyphoid?   **YES/NO**

If the answer to any question is 'yes', the individual should not be permitted to handle food or enter food handling areas if there is any likelihood of direct or indirect contamination. Further advice should be sought e.g. from your Environmental Health Officer and/or Doctor.

ACTION TAKEN

....

....

....

....

....

OWNER/MANAGER .... **DATE** ....

I hereby declare that the information I have given is correct and I undertake to notify my employer/ manager if I suffer from any of the above illnesses/conditions.

EMPLOYEE .... **DATE** ....

SAFE CATERING

SC8 – All-In-One Record Page 1 0f 2

This form may be completed daily and used as an alternative to the individual records: 'SC1 – Food Delivery ', 'SC2 – 'Fridge/Cold Room/Display Chill Temperature', 'SC3 – Cooking/Cooling/Reheating ' and 'SC4 – Hot Hold/Display'

Date:..................................

FOOD DELIVERY RECORDS

FOOD ITEM (High Risk Ready-to-eat foods only)	SUPPLIED BY	CHECK USE BY DATE	TEMP *°C	COMMENTS/ACTION	SIGN

*Chilled food: max. 8°C; Hot Food: minimum 63°C

FRIDGE/COLD ROOM/DISPLAY CHILL TEMPERATURE RECORDS

TEMPERATURE OF FRIDGE/COLD ROOM/DISPLAY CHILL*
(insert name or number of units in shaded boxes)

AM	PM**	AM	PM**	AM	PM**	AM	PM**	AM	PM**	COMMENTS/ACTION	SIGN

*Some businesses may wish to record freezer temperatures.
**It is recommended that fridge temperatures are checked at least once per day. Some businesses may wish to check fridges more frequently.

SAFE CATERING

SC8 – All-In-One Record Page 2 0f 2

COOKING/COOLING/REHEATING RECORDS

FOOD	COOKING			COOLING				REHEATING			COMMENTS/ACTION
	TIME STARTED COOKING**	TIME FINISHED COOKING	CORE TEMP.	SIGN (initials)	DATE	TIME INTO FRIDGE/ BLAST CHILL/ FREEZER	SIGN (initials)	DATE	CORE TEMP.	SIGN (initials)	

* Core temperature above 75°C.
** It is not necessary to record the time started cooking, if the core temperature is checked.

HOT HOLD/DISPLAY RECORDS (For Food To Be Held Hot For More Than 2 Hours)

FOOD	TIME INTO HOT HOLD	CORE TEMP* (After 2 hours on display)	CORE TEMP* (After 4 hours on display)	CORE TEMP* (After 6 hours on display)	COMMENTS/ACTIONS	SIGNED

* Keep hot food above 63°C.

Manager/Supervisor check on	/	/	/	Initials	

COMMENTS: ....

SAFE CATERING

SC9 – Customer Delivery Record

CUSTOMER DELIVERY RECORD

DATE	FOODS DELIVERED (ready-to-eat foods only)	QUANTITY	BATCH CODE/ USE BY DATE	CUSTOMER DETAILS (name/address)	DELIVERY TEMP*°C	ADEQUATE SEPARATION OF RAW & READY-TO-EAT FOODS YES/NO	COMMENTS	SIGN

NOTE: For large deliveries, monitor one or two food products from that delivery.
***Chilled food: max. 8°C (preferably 5°C or below); hot food: minimum 63°C.**
Ready-to-eat food must be adequately separated from raw food during transport and distribution.

Manager/Supervisor check on	/	/	/	/	/	/
Initials						

CLEAN AREA

only ready to eat food to be handled here

Effective Handwashing Technique

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

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

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