

## SAFE METHOD:

# SEPARATING FOODS



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

For more information on separating foods visit [the FSA website](#)

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



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

## THINK TWICE!

### Equipment with moving parts

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

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

WHAT TO DO IF THINGS GO WRONG	HOW TO STOP THIS HAPPENING AGAIN
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>If you think that ready-to-eat food has not been kept separate from raw food, throw away the food.</li> <li>If equipment/surfaces/utensils have been touched by raw food, wash, disinfect and dry them to prevent harmful bacteria from spreading.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Train staff again on this safe method.</li> <li>Improve staff supervision.</li> <li>Re-organise delivery times, storage and food preparation to make it easier to keep food separate.</li> <li>Make sure you have enough storage space and it is well organised.</li> </ul>

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

