

SAFE METHOD:

PREPARATION – READY-TO-EAT FOOD



It is important to handle unwrapped ready-to-eat food safely to protect it from harmful bacteria and allergens.

Ready-to-eat food is food that will not be cooked or reheated before it is eaten. This includes sandwiches and salads that you make, cooked meats (such as ham), cheese, smoked fish, cream cakes and desserts.

SAFETY POINT	WHY?	HOW DO YOU DO THIS?
<p>It is particularly important to prepare and handle unwrapped ready-to-eat food safely. To do this:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • make sure work surfaces, knives, etc, are thoroughly clean and disinfected after use if you have prepared raw meat, poultry, fish, eggs or unwashed vegetables • prepare raw and ready-to-eat food in separate clean areas. If this is not possible, surfaces and all utensils must be thoroughly cleaned and disinfected between tasks. (See the Think Twice section in the 'Cleaning effectively' safe method) • use separate chopping boards and utensils for raw and ready-to-eat food • protect food from dirt and bacteria, by covering it or keeping it in suitable display equipment at all times during preparation and storage • staff should wash hands thoroughly between tasks 	<p>How you handle ready-to-eat food is particularly important because it will not be cooked or reheated before selling.</p> <p>Bacteria can be spread from hands to food. This cleaning & disinfection stops bacteria being spread onto food surfaces and equipment. It also helps keep allergens from spreading.</p> 	<p>List the types of unwrapped ready-to-eat food you prepare and sell:</p>
<p>Follow the manufacturer's instructions on how to store and prepare the food, if these are available.</p> <p>Remember to store raw food and ready to eat food separately.</p>	<p>The manufacturer's instructions are designed to keep the food safe.</p> <p>This helps to prevent harmful bacteria spreading from raw foods to ready to eat foods.</p>	<p>Do you do this for all ready-to-eat food where instructions are available?</p> <p>Yes</p> <p>What do you do to make sure raw food and ready to eat food are stored separately?</p>
<p>Make sure you keep ready-to-eat food cold enough. See the 'Chilled storage and display' safe method in the Chilling section.</p>	<p>If these types of food are not kept cold enough, harmful bacteria could grow.</p>	<p>Do you do this? Yes</p> <p>If not, what do you do?</p>



SAFETY POINT	WHY?	HOW DO YOU DO THIS?
<p>Do not use or sell ready-to-eat food after the 'use by' date.</p> <p>For sandwiches and other food you have prepared, and for food you have removed from its original packaging, you should have a method of keeping track of when it should be sold or thrown away.</p>	<p>You should never use food that has passed its 'use by' date because it might not be safe to eat. It is illegal to sell food after its 'use by' date.</p>	<p>When do you check your 'use-by' dates?</p> <p>What system do you use to date food made in-house?</p>
<p>If you slice cooked meat:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • make sure you follow the manufacturer's instructions when you clean the slicer • avoid handling the meat as much as possible. It is a good idea to slice meat straight onto the wrapping. Use clean tongs, instead of hands • you should not use the same slicer, or other equipment, for both raw and ready-to-eat food 	<p>Meat slicers need careful cleaning and disinfecting to prevent dirt building up and to stop harmful bacteria growing and possible allergens spreading in particular on the slicing blade.</p> <p>Hands can easily spread harmful bacteria onto food.</p> <p>It is not possible to clean such equipment thoroughly enough to be sure all harmful bacteria and possible allergens have been removed, any bacteria and possible allergens could then spread to ready-to-eat food.</p>	<p>Are staff trained how to clean the meat slicer properly, or supervised?</p> <p>Yes No</p>
<p>When preparing salad ingredients:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • peel, trim, or remove the outer parts, as appropriate • wash them thoroughly by rubbing vigorously in a bowl of clean water • wash the cleanest ones first <p>If you have prepared salad ingredients that have dirt or soil on the outside, thoroughly clean and disinfect chopping boards and work surfaces before preparing other foods.</p> <p>Colour coded chopping boards are a useful way of keeping raw food and ready to eat food separate during preparation.</p> <p>Wash your hands before and after handling fruit and vegetables.</p>	<p>The dirt on salad ingredients can contain harmful bacteria. Peeling and washing helps to remove dirt and bacteria.</p> 	<p>Do you do this? Yes</p> <p>If not, what do you do?</p>

WHAT TO DO IF THINGS GO WRONG	HOW TO STOP THIS HAPPENING AGAIN
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If you think that a food delivery has not been handled safely, reject the delivery. • If ready-to-eat food has been prepared using a work surface or knife that has been used for raw food without being cleaned and disinfected, throw the food away. • If ready-to-eat food has not been chilled safely, throw the food away. • If salad ingredients have not been washed properly, wash them following the advice in this safe method. • If staff are not washing their hands properly, remind them of the importance of hand washing, when handling food. (See Handwashing safe method). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If you do not think a supplier handles food safely, consider changing to a new supplier. • Review the way you receive deliveries. • Review the way you store and prepare ready-to-eat food. • Train staff again on this safe method. • Improve staff supervision.

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

