# A Guide to Working Safely with Food

FOOD SAFETY

KAPITI COAST
DISTRICT COUNCIL

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## Food Safety:

The intention of food safety is to prevent food poisoning, (the transmission of disease through food) and to maintain the wholesomeness of the food product through all stages of processing, until it is finally eaten.

Food safety involves more than just cleanliness; it includes all practices involved with –

- Protecting food from the risk of contamination, including harmful bacteria, poisons and foreign objects.
- Preventing any bacteria present in the food multiplying to a level that would result in food poisoning, or the early spoilage of the food.
- Destroying any harmful bacteria in the food by thorough cooking or processing.

## Education:

A good knowledge of safe food handling practices is essential for all those involved in food processing, storage, distribution and sale.

Kapiti Coast District Council Food Safety Bylaw 2006 states that:

a) All food workers on duty at a food premises must have passed an approved basic food hygiene course (Unit Standard 167); and

b) At least one person must be on duty at a food premises in a supervisory and training capacity who has passed Unit Standard 167 and 168.

Training that would meet this requirement includes:
- NZQA Certificate in Food Hygiene
- Open Polytechnic Basic Food Hygiene Certificate

### Current Training Providers:

- **Open Polytechnic**
  Private Bag 31-914, Lower Hutt
  Tel: 0508 650 200

- **Innovative Educators**
  7-11 Prouse St, Levin
  Tel: 04 298 8894 or 06 368 0336
  E-mail: contact@innovative.ac.nz

- **Hospitality Training Company**
  PO Box 1500 Paraparaumu Beach
  Tel: 027 610 1874
  E-mail: team@hospitalitytraining.co.nz

- **AgriQuality**
  Private Bag, New Plymouth
  Tel: 0800 100 205

- **Food Safety Works Ltd**
  P O Box 7213, Wellington South
  Tel: 04 970 0175

## Food Poisoning:

Food poisoning is a general name given to illnesses contracted by consuming contaminated food or water.

The micro-organisms responsible for illness are bacteria, viruses and fungi. But illness can also be caused by chemical contaminants (such as heavy metals), toxins produced by the growth of some micro-organisms (e.g. Staphylococci bacteria) and by a variety of organic substances that may be present naturally in foods (such as certain mushrooms and some seafood).

Generally food poisoning results from contamination of food and the subsequent growth of food poisoning micro-organisms.

## The Ten Main Reasons for Food Poisoning:

1. Inadequate cooling/refrigeration, food left at room temperature.
2. Too long between preparation and consumption.
3. Inadequate reheating.
4. Inadequate cooking.
5. Cross-contamination from raw foods to high risk/ready to eat foods.
6. Infected food handlers.
7. Inadequate hot holding temperatures.
8. Inadequate hand washing.
9. Contaminated raw food and ingredients.
10. Improper cleaning of equipment and utensils.

## High Risk Foods:

High Risk Foods are those perishable foods which can support the growth of harmful bacteria and are intended to be eaten without further treatment such as cooking, which would destroy such organisms. They include:

- All cooked meat and poultry.
- Cooked meat products including gravy, stock, and roll/sandwich fillings.
- Milk, cream, artificial cream, custards and dairy products.
- Cooked eggs and products made with eggs, e.g. Mayonnaise.
- Shellfish and other seafood.
- Cooked rice.

## Food Spoilage:

Food decays, or goes off, due to the micro-organisms that always exist in food - these are not necessarily the bacteria that cause food poisoning.

The Signs that food is spoiling are:

Odour: 'off odours' are smells (sometimes like rotten eggs) that are produced when bacteria break down the protein in food, (usually fatty foods). This process is called putrefaction. Taints due to flavour change may also occur.

Sliminess: Food becomes slimy as the bacterial population grows. Moulds may also form slimy whiskers.

Discolouration: Foods can become discoloured by microbial growth. Some moulds have coloured spores that give the food a distinctive colour, for example, black pin mould on bread, or blue and green mould on citrus fruit and cheese.
Souring: Food can go sour when certain bacteria produce acids. A common example is when milk sours from the production of lactic acid.

Gas: Bacteria and yeasts often produce gaseous by-products that can affect food. You may have noticed meat becoming spongy, or packages and cans swelling or having a popping or fizzing sound on opening.

# Prevention of Food Poisoning:

## Delivery:

You assume responsibility for the quality of the product you use when it reaches your premises. If it's unsafe and you accept it – it becomes your problem. So watch for damaged and inappropriate packaging, such as multi-use cartons that cannot be cleaned between uses.

Frozen, chilled and easily perishable food should be delivered when you are open. If you're not open you need to make arrangements for the food to be put straight into a refrigerator or freezer.

**Food temperature should be measured and recorded upon delivery.**

## Personal Hygiene:

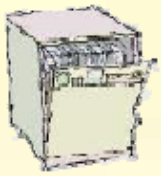
Wash hands, preferably with antibacterial liquid soap, a nail brush and warm water and then dry with disposable paper towels. Remember to wash your hands:

- After using the toilet
- Upon entering the kitchen
- Before handling food
- When they are dirty or soiled
- After using a handkerchief
- After handling raw food
- After smoking
- After a break
- After coughing, or touching hair, nose or mouth

Food can easily be contaminated so:

| DO'S | DO NOT'S |
|---|---|
| Wear clean work clothes everyday. | Sneeze or cough near food or dishes. |
| Use tongs whenever possible when handling food. | Touch hair, nose or mouth during food preparation. |
| Keep hair covered. | Wear rings and other jewellery. |
| Cover minor cuts and abrasions on hands with brightly coloured plasters and disposable gloves. | Wipe hands on work clothes, apron or kitchen clothes. |
| Advise supervisor if unwell. | Attend work when unwell with gastroenteritis and within 48 hours after the symptoms cease. |
| Sample cooking with a clean spoon each time | Do not smoke while preparing food. |

## Clean Equipment:



- Clean fridges, freezer and dishwashers regularly.
- Clean and sanitise all surfaces and cutlery used to prepare raw food.
- Use cleaning chemicals only for the purpose that they were designed for and in the concentrations indicated by the manufacturer.
- Clean storage containers before you fill them.
- Dishwasher cycles must reach 60˚C (wash) and 77˚C (rinse).

Regularly servicing your dishwasher will ensure dishes and cutlery are sanitised and squeaky clean. Ensure the technician leaves you a written record of servicing visits.

Ensure you clean at each production step. To remind you when to do this – create a cleaning schedule listing the area and equipment to be cleaned and how often. The cleaning schedule should include how to clean the equipment, what products to use, when to clean and the person responsible.

## Chilling:

- Chill all food (including vegetables) that is not served straight away.
- Chill all perishable food in the fridge and place frozen food in the freezer, as soon as it is delivered to you.
- Chill all cooked food within 30 minutes of cooking.
- Chill all raw meats in the bottom of the fridge, so they don't drip onto other food.
- Chill all cooked food and raw food in separate covered containers.
- Separate unwashed vegetables from all prepared food.
- Ensure good stock rotation

Bacteria can cause food poisoning, and thrive at room temperature – between 4˚C and 60˚C. Keeping food well chilled will help to keep it safe.

Regularly checking that fridges and freezers are working properly will help protect food from bacteria. The best temperature for fridges is below 4˚C; freezers should be kept at below -18˚C.

## Defrosting:

Frozen food can be defrosted:

- In the fridge overnight
- Under running cold water
- In the microwave

Defrost food in a container large enough to collect all liquid.

Remember: Defrosted food shouldn't be refrozen.
Remember: Do not defrost food at room temperature.

## Preparation:

Raw and cooked food should be prepared separately.

If possible use separate cutting boards and utensils for raw red meat, raw chicken, cooked meat and vegetables. Colour coding of equipment helps to ensure this separation occurs.

Otherwise, clean and sanitize all equipment thoroughly before preparing a different food product.

## Cooking:

Cooking food at high heat kills bacteria.

- Cook meat (especially chicken) until the juices run clear; or until it has reached 82˚C in the centre.
- After cooking food in the microwave, leave it to stand for two to three minutes to ensure it is cooked through.
- If cooked product is to be chilled / frozen, separate into small batches so it will cool faster - ensuring food spends less time in the danger zone.

## Display:

- Food on display should be kept hot in a pie warmer or Bain Marie, or kept cold in a chilled display cabinet.
- Food on display that is not kept chilled or hot, must not be out for longer than a total of two hours.
- Recording the time the food is displayed will ensure food is not left out longer than is safe.
- Protect counter food from customers, dust and flies with plastic or mesh covers.
- Display cabinets need proper covers or windows that can be closed when not in use.

Extra care needs to be taken with easily perishable food i.e. milk products, meat, fish, chicken, egg or shellfish. These foods can be carriers of bacteria and poorly stored perishable foods are frequent causes of food borne illness.

## Storage:

- Store food in covered containers or cling film when storing it in the fridge or freezer. (Damp tea-towels, bread bags and shopping bags are not suitable).
- Separate hot product into small batches so it will cool quickly and spend less time in the danger zone.
- Store food (including dry goods) in clean containers, with lids.
- Store food that is not being eaten straight away in a refrigerator at or below 4˚C or in a oven or warmer hotter than 60˚C.

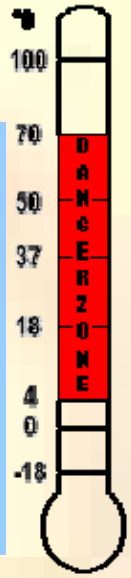
Fresh food is safe food – dating storage containers will help you to use food before its 'best-before' date.

## Temperature Control:

Store hot food above 60˚C.

Keep refrigerated units below 4˚C

Keep freezer units below -18˚C




## Food Safety Requirements:

The following is a basic outline of the procedures that should be in place in your kitchen to ensure you produce safe food.

Personal Hygiene Policy
- Jewellery policy
- Uniform procedures
- Personal habit and hand washing rules

Temperature Checklist
- Delivered foods
- Refrigerated foods
- Hot foods

Pest Control and Maintenance Programme
- Pest control
- Equipment and structural maintenance and checks.

Cleaning Schedule
- Cleaning instructions displayed
- Cleaning and sanitising equipment available
- Wash hand basin maintenance

Food Safety Procedures
- Cross contamination protection
- Stock rotation system
- Food preparation procedures

Accident and Illness Procedures
- Reports of accidents or illnesses i.e. vomiting or diarrhoea
- Reports of any equipment breakages
- Food complaint reporting

Training Procedures
- On site training for new staff.
- Basic Food Safety certification
- Keep records of all training.

## Food Safety Programmes:

Good food practices should incorporate Hazard Analysis Critical Control Point methodologies – (HACCP)

It is recommended that every food business adopt the HACCP approach to identify all potential hazards and control them before they result in problems.

Setting up a HACCP system will involve:

- **Set up a HACCP team** – of those people who fully understand the product.
- **Draw up flow charts** – that define all stages in the preparation process, from raw material through to consumption or sale.
- **Identify all potential hazards** – (e.g. physical, chemical, bacterial etc.)
- **Identify the critical control points** – consider all preventative measure and decide which are needed to eliminate or reduce potential hazards to acceptable levels.
- **Determine target levels and tolerances for control points** – (e.g. time)
- **Establish monitoring systems for critical control points** – (e.g. work out who should act and when, where and what action should be taken).
- **Establish a recording and documentation system**.
- **Review the HACCP system** – annually and when changes are made to any process.

The following free booklets are available from the Environmental Health Department to assist you develop a Food Safety Programme.

- What does a Food Safety Programme Look Like?
- Introduction to HACCP

Once a Food Safety Programme (FSP) is registered your premises is automatically exempt from the Food Hygiene Regulations 1974.

## Who Does What?

### Your Local Authority:

- **Environmental Health**

Will provide advice regarding food hygiene and compliance with Food Hygiene Regulations 1974.
CONTACT: Duty Environmental Health Officer (04) 2964700

- **Building Control**

Will provide advice on construction requirements, building consents, access for disabled persons and project information memoranda.
CONTACT: KCDC Building Control Office (04) 2964700

- **Resource Consents (planning)**

If you intend to change the nature of your business. Resource Consents can provide information on zoning, parking requirements and advertising.
CONTACT: Duty Resource Consents Planner (04) 2964700

- **Liquor Licensing**

Will provide advice on the liquor licensing requirements under the Sale of Liquor Act 1989.
CONTACT: Liquor Licensing Inspector (04) 2964700

### Public Health Service

The Food Safety and Quality Team will provide advice on the correct labelling of food, additives etc and should be contacted if you are considering developing a food safety programme.
CONTACT: Hutt Valley Health Duty Food Officer (04) 570 9033

### Occupational Health and Safety (OSH)

The Health and Safety Officer will provide advice on health and safety in the work place and compliance with the Health and Safety and Employment Act 1992.
CONTACT: Department of Labour (04) 915 4222

## Contact Details:

If you require any further information please:

**Telephone** for advice or an appointment:
Phone: 04 296 4700

**Visit us at:**
Kapiti Coast District Council
Environmental Health
175 Rimu Road
PARAPARAUMU

**Write to:**
Kapiti Coast District Council
Private Bag 601
Paraparaumu 5254

**On-line at:**
www.kapiticoast.govt.nz