

Hotdish Showdown Rules & Best Practices

Foodborne illness outbreaks can happen anywhere and can affect a large number of people. Many outbreaks result because a food worker may not take food safety seriously. The good news is that a foodborne illness is preventable. Follow these tips to avoid a foodborne illness outbreak:

KEEP CLOTHES CLEAN

Dirty clothes not only give customers a bad impression, but also carry harmful microorganisms.

- Wear clean clothes.
- Wear clean aprons.
- Roll up long sleeves.
- Keep hair from falling into food! Wear hair pulled back, in a cap or in a hair net.
- Remove aprons when leaving area

KEEP HANDS CLEAN

Handwashing is one of the easiest, most effective ways to prevent foodborne illnesses.

- Wash hands often: Before you start your shift; after handling raw foods; after coughing or blowing your nose; after handling the garbage; after using the bathroom; after you handle money.
- Wash hands with lots of soap. Soap creates a slippery surface for the “germs” to slide off.
- Scrub hands together for at least 20 seconds (sing Happy Birthday to yourself).
- Dry hands on a paper towel. Do NOT use dish towels or apron or your clothes to dry your hands.
- If you have a cut on your hand, bandage it and wear plastic gloves when touching food.
- Trim fingernails and keep them clean

SERVE FOOD SAFELY

- Serve food not fingers! Do NOT touch food with bare hands. Use tongs, forks, gloves, deli tissues or scoops to handle food.
- Protect foods from dust, sneezing, and handling by guests. Use appropriate packaging and covers on food.
- Never chew gum.
- Do NOT prepare food or work if you are sick with vomiting and/or diarrhea

USE CLEAN EQUIPMENT/UTENSILS

When dirty equipment and utensils are used, microorganisms will be transferred to the food.

- Use a mechanical dishwasher OR 3 sinks for washing, rinsing, and sanitizing.
- Use clean dishes and utensils for food preparation.
- Wash equipment and utensils with hot, soapy water after EACH use even if you use the same piece of equipment or utensil for preparing several foods (e.g. knife)

USE PROPER SANITIZING SOLUTIONS

Food contact surfaces—dishes, utensils, sinks, counters, etc.

1. Wash with warm soapy.
2. Rinse with clear water.
3. Sanitize for at least 10 seconds. Use 1 tablespoon bleach per 1 gallon of water or per manufacturer directions.
4. Air dry

USE A FOOD THERMOMETER

Eating undercooked foods has resulted in serious foodborne illness outbreaks.

- Use a calibrated food thermometer to insure foods are cooked to the proper internal temperature.
- The following foods should reach an internal temperature of:

Product Temperature:

Whole meats (chops, steaks, roasts) 145°F, plus 3 minute rest/stand time for safety

Ground meats 160°F Poultry, ground or whole 165°F

Soup, stews, egg dishes, stuffing, casseroles 165°F

(Source: USDA, Revised Cooking Temperature, May 2011)

COOL FOODS CORRECTLY

Hot foods stored in large containers in the refrigerator cannot cool down quickly.

- Foods must be cooled from 140°F to 70°F within 2 hours and then cooled to 40°F or lower in an additional 4 hours.
- Store foods in small shallow pans (2-3 inches deep) and refrigerate immediately.
- Metal containers chill foods fast.
- Use ice to quickly chill foods and to keep them cold.
- Do NOT cool hot foods at room temperature before refrigeration

KEEP HOT FOODS HOT

If hot foods are held below 140°F, microorganisms will grow rapidly.

- Keep hot foods at 140°F or higher.
- Keep food hot in a 200°F oven.
- Use a food thermometer to check the temperature of hot foods.
- Do not mix a fresh batch of a food item with an existing item.
- Do not let hot food sit at room temperature for more than 2 hours.

KEEP COLD FOODS COLD

If cold foods are held between 40°-140°F, microorganisms will grow rapidly.

- Keep cold foods at 40°F or lower.
- Do not leave cold food at room temperature for more than 2 hours.
- Refrigerate ingredients before mixing together (e.g. refrigerate potatoes and eggs before mixing with the dressing).