



SERVING UP FOOD SAFETY

From The Food Protection
Management Office
Texas A&M AgriLife Extension
Service

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2253 TAMU 118 Cater-Mattil
College Station, TX 77843
Phone: 979-458-2025

Do You Have a Certified Food/Kitchen Manager On Site?

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, each year roughly one in six people in the United States get sick from eating contaminated food. The food industry needs to know the causes of foodborne illness outbreaks so prevention methods can be taken. A study conducted by the Environmental Health Specialists Network (EHS-Net) was conducted to identify pathogens and contributing factors associated with restaurant related outbreaks, as they are the most common place for outbreaks to occur.

Results of the study include:

- Restaurants with certified kitchen managers (CKMs) had a lower risk for outbreaks. CKMs pass a test to show knowledge of food safety.
- Outbreak restaurants with CKMs were less likely than those without CKMs to have outbreaks of norovirus and *C. perfringens*. Outbreaks were also less likely to have been caused by workers touching food with bare hands.
- Awareness of Hazard Analysis Critical Control Points (HACCP) by CKMs may have led to better control of bare-hand contact with food (a cause of norovirus) and of food temperatures during cooling and reheating (a cause of *C. perfringens*).
- Sit-down and ethnic restaurants were more likely to have outbreaks. But they are also more likely to have complex food preparation, which is also a factor in outbreaks. Therefore these traits may be a proxy for complex food preparation. More work is needed to find the link between these traits and outbreaks.
- Restaurants with kitchen managers certified in food safety were less likely to have foodborne illness outbreaks. Non-outbreak restaurants were more likely to have had CKM training from a public agency or restaurant corporation.

EHS recommendations:

EHS recommends that restaurants should require someone to obtain a managers certification from a high quality training program.

Source: https://www.cdc.gov/nceh/ehs/ehsnet/plain_language/differences-restaurants-linked-to-outbreaks.htm

Article by: Rebecca Dittmar

Allergies - Did You Know?

According to the 2015 TFER, a major food allergen is a food protein that causes an adverse immune response. The law passed in 2004 called FALCPA named eight most common allergens. They are milk (dairy), eggs, fish, crustacean shellfish (crab, lobster, shrimp), tree nuts (almonds, walnuts, pecans), peanuts, wheat, and soybeans; they account for about 90% of food allergic reactions. But there are over 160 foods that cause allergic reactions. Symptoms of an allergic reaction are: hives, flushed skin, tingling or itchy sensation, swelling of the face, tongue, or lip, vomiting or diarrhea, abdominal cramps, coughing/wheezing, dizziness, swelling of the throat, loss of consciousness, or anaphylaxis—severe allergic reaction that can cause death. Each year it is estimated that anaphylaxis to food results in 30,000 emergency room visits, 2,500 hospitalizations, and 150 deaths!

What can you do at your food establishment to keep allergic reactions from happening? Inform guests who have food allergies of any ingredients used in uncommon places. If a package does not have a label or you are not sure of the ingredients—do not guess. Avoid cross contact - this is when food comes in contact with food that causes an allergic reaction. This can happen either by the foods touching (cheese on a burger that was put on than taken off), using the same utensil (flipping a soy burger than flipping a hamburger), touching allergen foods with hands and not washing them correctly afterward or not changing gloves, or not properly cleaning and sanitizing food contacts surfaces that came in contact with the allergen food (making peanut butter cookies on a surface and than making sugar cookies on the same surface without cleaning and sanitizing first).

On a side note: Think about what kind of gloves you use in your establishment, many people are allergic to latex.

Remember it is your responsibility to keep your customers safe!

Source: TFER and FDA

Article by: Julie Prouse



Over Easy Might Make You Queasy



Did you know that clean eggs can and still can contain pathogens? One bacteria of concern is Salmonella, which accounts for 79,000 cases of foodborne illness and 30 deaths each year according to the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA). Salmonella is highly linked to the consumption of raw and under cooked eggs. The FDA has established regulations that are aimed to help prevent the contamination of eggs, but food prepares and consumers are also responsible for preventing illnesses from the consumption of eggs. The FDA requires all cartons of shell eggs that are not treated to destroy Salmonella to be labeled with this safe handling statement: "Safe Handling Instructions to prevent illness from bacteria: keep eggs refrigerated, cook eggs until yolks are firm, and cook foods containing eggs thoroughly."

When handling eggs:

- Keep hands, food preparation areas (including countertops), and utensils clean at all times. This can reduce the chances of having bacteria spread to food.
Always wash hands with soap and warm water before and after handling raw foods. Be sure to scrub under the nails, between the fingers, and on the back of hands.
- Avoid bare hand contact when possible. Use a utensil or gloves to help prevent the spread of germs.
- Wash and sanitize work surfaces and cutting boards thoroughly with hot, soapy water before and after preparing food. Sanitizing the work surfaces will help kill bacteria that might have been transferred from foods, utensils, or even hands. As a general rule is to clean as you go.
- Cook eggs to proper temperatures before serving customers. Eggs cooked for immediate service should reach a minimum internal temperature of 145°F. Eggs held hot should be cooked to a minimum internal temperature of 155°F.

Follow these general rules when handling raw eggs or foods containing raw eggs.

Source: <http://www.fda.gov/Food/FoodborneIllnessContaminants/BuyStoreServeSafeFood/ucm077342.htm>

Article By: Rebecca Dittmar

TFER FAQ (Technical Questions)

Are all surfaces of reach-in working coolers considered food contact surfaces?

Not all surfaces of the reach in cooler are considered food contact. If food products are in the reach-in preparation cooler, uncovered, and above the load line, then the interior portion of the lid of the reach-in cooler would be considered a food contact surface.

Should expired dry foods, such as macaroni, cakes mixes, etc., be marked as a violation of Item #7?

The expiration dates on packaged dry foods are voluntarily provided by the manufacturers. Code dates are useful for rotating product to prevent insect infestations. Often quality characteristics such as changes in flavor, color, or consistency are the basis for code dating rather than safety concerns. Item #7 should not be marked for exceeding a voluntary expiration date unless the product is deemed unsafe, adulterated, or otherwise unfit for consumption.

Should foods be date marked with the date of consumption or the date of preparation?

According to the TFER, the container of ready-to-eat TCS food shall be marked to indicate the date by which food shall be consumed on the premises, sold or discarded. The ready-to-eat TCS food if held at 41°F can only be held for a maximum of 7 days.

Is one fly on the preparation table a violation?

Yes, TFER §228.186(k), states the presence of insects, rodents, and other pest shall be control to eliminate their presence. The would be a Core Item #34 violation.

Source: TFER

Article by: Julie Prouse



Upcoming Food Protection Management Course

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