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# SAFE FOOD HANDLING FOR BUTCHERS



Chief Environmental Health Officers Group N.I.

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## FOREWORD

In January 2006, European changes to food hygiene legislation required that all food businesses, including butchers, apply food safety management procedures based on the principles of Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points [HACCP] to their businesses.

To assist business, Environmental Health Officers and the Food Standards Agency along with consultation from the butchers sector, worked together to produce this guide, 'Safe Food Handling for Butchers'. This is based on an original HACCP Guide for Butchers developed in 2001 by Southern Group Environmental Health Committee.

The Chief Environmental Health Officers Group would like to record their gratitude to members of the 'Safe Food Handling for Butchers Review Group' for their commitment, time, expertise and support given to the development of this guide. Members of the Group are listed overleaf.

We believe that the guidance within these pages will assist butchers, not only in building on existing good practice, but also in complying with food hygiene legislation.

We are confident that this Safe Food Handling for Butchers will prove a valuable resource to all of us committed to the very important issue of raising food safety standards and protecting consumers.

**Barney Heywood**

Chair, Chief Environmental Health Officers Group Northern Ireland  
June 2012





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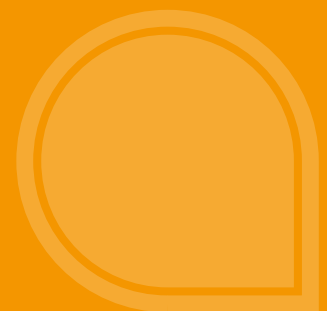
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### Note

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1. It is the responsibility of the proprietors of food businesses to comply with current food safety legislation.
2. Only Courts can interpret statutory legislation with any authority.
3. The advice given in this document is based on information to hand and is subject to revision in light of further information.
4. The document is not intended to be a definitive guide to, nor a substitute for, the relevant law. Independent legal advice should be sought where appropriate.

# Introduction



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## Welcome to 'Safe Food Handling for Butchers'

This 'Safe Food Handling for Butchers' pack has been developed for butchers shops whose activities include handling raw and ready-to-eat foods, but it may also be used by retailers who have a butchery element within the business.

The revision of this pack reflects the Food Standards Agency [FSA] guidance document "E coli 0157 control of cross-contamination - Guidance for food business operators and enforcement authorities" which was issued in February 2011.

This guidance document and accompanying question and answer document is available on the following website: <http://www.food.gov.uk/multimedia/pdfs/publication/ecoliguide0211.pdf>

Unlike other food poisoning bacteria, E coli 0157 is a particularly harmful bacteria as only a few organisms [less than 100 bacteria] can lead to serious illness and death. The severity of the illness and the lack of treatment mean that every consumer needs to be protected from the risk of food being contaminated by E coli 0157.

One of the most common sources of E coli 0157 is raw meat and a number of outbreaks have occurred which have been linked to the contamination of ready-to-eat foods by raw foods within butchery premises. As butchery premises undertake a wide range of food production activities, for example cooking and cooling joints of meats or salad and coleslaw production, the risk of cross contamination from raw meat handling activities is very significant. Therefore, stringent measures are required during all stages of food production to control the particular risks associated with this bacteria.

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### Using this butcher's pack in your business will help you to:

- **Comply with food hygiene law**
- **Implement controls to prevent cross contamination**
- **Make food safely**
- **Train staff**
- **Protect your business's reputation**
- **Improve your business**

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The owner and manager should take charge of the document and work together with their staff to make sure that they use it effectively.

- **If you are the owner/director:** you are directly responsible for food safety in your business. You should discuss with your manager[s] [if you have one] how to make this pack work in your business.
  - **If you are a manager:** talk to the owner of the business about this pack. If you are responsible for the day-to-day running of the business, then you are the best person to work through this pack, talking to your staff.
  - **If you are a staff member:** you must work together with management to make food that is safe to eat.
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Article 5 of EC Regulation 852/2004 requires Food Business Operators to put in place, implement and maintain a permanent procedure or procedures based on HACCP [Hazard Analysis Critical Control Point] principles.

During routine visits to your business your local Environmental Health Officer [EHO] will be assessing how you comply with this requirement.

The document is based on the principles of HACCP. This is a process that helps you look at how you handle food and introduce procedures to make sure the food you produce is safe to eat.

**HACCP involves the following 7 steps:-**

1. identify what could go wrong [the **hazards**];
2. identify the most important points where things can go wrong [**the critical control points - CCPs**];
3. set **critical limits** at each CCP [e.g. cooking temperature/time];
4. carry out checks at CCPs to prevent problems occurring [**monitoring**];
5. decide what to do if something goes wrong [**corrective action**];
6. prove that your HACCP Plan is working [**verification**]; and
7. keep records of all of the above [**documentation**].

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**This HACCP Plan must be kept up to date. You will need to review it from time to time, especially whenever something in your food operation changes.**

**You may also wish to ask your local Environmental Health Officer for advice.**

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# How to use this document







## 2.1 How to use 'Safe Food Handling for Butchers'

It is important that you read this section so you understand how this butchers guide works and what to do.

The remainder of the guide is broken into;

- Section 3 - Safe Food Handling Plan
- Section 4 - Hygiene Requirements
- Section 5 - Recording Forms



Information on how to complete each of these sections is outlined below.

## 2.2 How to use Section 3 - Safe Food Handling Plan

### What you need to do

- To complete your plan use a fine pointed permanent marker. This can be erased using methylated spirits or alcohol wipes [e.g. probe wipes] when you need to make modifications to your plan.
- Complete the details for your premises and persons involved in your Safe Food Handling Plan on page 7. When you have completed the pack sign and date the declaration of completion on page 8
- Include a sketch of the layout of your premises to show the location of your clean areas, raw meat areas, equipment, sinks, etc.
- The coloured boxes on page 7 list the steps that are likely to be used by many butchery operations.
- Review your processes and if it shows that you carry out any of the steps described, tick the relevant coloured boxes.
- The boxes that you have ticked show the steps where you must control hazards in your butchery operation. The colours in the boxes relate to the coloured steps on pages 11-92.
- If you do not tick a specific coloured box you will not need to use that coloured section. You may consider moving these pages to the back of the document for later use should your operations change.
- At every step you will find advice relating to the food safety practices for that step. Ensure that you and relevant staff read and follow this advice.
- List examples of the foods that are relevant to the step.
- Answer the questions and tick the boxes in each coloured section if they apply to you and **ensure that you and your staff follow these procedures.**
- Information on how a step is structured and how to complete it is shown overleaf.

## Step: Storage

List here examples of foods which are relevant to the step

Examples of food

What can go wrong here? [Hazards]	What can I do about it? [Control/Critical Limits]	How can I check? [Monitoring/Verification]	What if it's not right? [Corrective Action]
Growth of food poisoning bacteria in cold ready-to-eat food.	Store below 8°C. <input type="checkbox"/> I do this	Measure the temperature of the food by:- <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>taking the temperature of a 'dummy food' e.g. [pre-packed jelly or water]. <input type="checkbox"/> I do this</li> <li>measuring core or surface temperature of food in fridge [when taking a core temperature wash and disinfect the probe before and after use]. <input type="checkbox"/> I do this</li> </ul> [Record on BR2, sec 5 pg 129]	If temperatures of food are recorded above 8°C..... Etc...

The 'What can go wrong here?' column identifies what can go wrong; [the hazard] at each particular step.

The 'What can I do about it?' column gives you information on what you can do to control the hazard. Tick the box(es) for the options you chose.

The 'How can I check?' column tells you how you can check that you are controlling the hazard. Record your checks on the relevant recording form.

Throughout the plan you will see references to food safety records, further information is given in section 5 page 127

The 'What if it's not right?' column tells you what to do if something goes wrong and how to prevent it from happening again.

### What you need to do [continued]

- If any steps in your butchery operation are different from the types described on page 7, then you should complete a copy of the blank sheet on page 92.
- Complete the section on Physical/Chemical Contamination on pages 77-81 by ticking the boxes which apply to you. Remember that these controls apply to all steps in your food handling operation from delivery to cooking and service of food to your customers.
- Complete the section on Food Allergies on pages 83-89 and again tick the controls and checks you have introduced. Again these controls apply to all steps in your business.

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## 2.3 What you will find in Section 4 - Additional Information

- Section 4 gives guidance on other hygiene requirements that must be addressed to assist your business in complying with the Law. There is guidance on:
  - Cleaning
  - Pest Control
  - Waste Control
  - Maintenance
  - Personal Hygiene
  - Training/Supervision
  - Advice on use of thermometers

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### What you need to do

- The boxes on page 7 list the other hygiene requirements which you must address.
- Tick the boxes to indicate that you have read and continuously implement each requirement as appropriate to your food business and instruct/train your staff accordingly.
- Finally, complete and sign the **Declaration of Completion of your Safe Food Handling Plan** on page 8.

### Reviewing your Safe Food Handling Plan

- Remember to review your Safe Food Handling Plan from time to time.
  - A minimum of a yearly review is recommended. You must also review your Safe Food Handling Plan if anything in your food operation changes, e.g. use of new equipment, changes to your product range or change of recipe, changes in the structure or layout of the premises.
  - You should sign and date your Declaration of Completion when the review has been completed.
  - Remember to include future review dates on the **Declaration of Completion of your Safe Food Handling Plan** on page 8.
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## 2.4. How to Use Section 5 - Recording Forms

- The following record forms are referenced throughout the Safe Food Handling Plan and master copies are provided in Section 5.
    - BR1 - Food Delivery Records
    - BR2 - Fridge/Cold Room/Display Chill Temperature Records
    - BR3 - Cooking/Cooling/Re-heating Records
    - BR4 - Hot Holding/Display Records
    - BR5 - Hygiene Inspection Checklist
    - BR6 - Hygiene Training Records
    - BR7 - Fitness to Work Assessment Form
    - BR8 - All-in-One Daily Record
    - BR9 - Customer Delivery Records
  - Use the record forms provided in section 5 to help you check that the food prepared on your premises is safe to eat and to monitor the controls you are using.
  - Keeping accurate records will help you comply with your legal requirements. This may also be useful as part of a due diligence defence. At inspections Environmental Health Officers will ask to see these records and will ask questions about the hazards identified and controls in place.
  - It is recommended that you keep records for at least 12 months. Your legal advisors may recommend a longer period or your Environmental Health Officer may ask you to keep them at least until his/her next inspection of your premises.
  - Managers/Supervisors should check records kept by their staff. These checks can be recorded on each record form.
  - The record forms are also available in coloured booklets, a set of which are supplied with the Safe Food Handling for Butchers. Further supplies of these booklets can be obtained by contacting your local Environmental Health Department.
  - Additional record sheets can be downloaded from [www.sgehc.com](http://www.sgehc.com)
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# Safe Food Handling Plan





## Safe Food Handling Plan

Name of Premises: .....

Address of Premises: .....

Food Business Operator[s] .....

Person[s] involved in producing Safe Food Handling Plan: .....

### Steps Used In Your Butchery Operation

Tick the boxes for the steps that you use in your Butchery Operation. Cross-contamination can occur at any of these steps.

Purchase, Delivery/  
Receipt, Collection & Traceability  
[Pages 11-20]

I do this

Reheating  
[Pages 61-64]

I do this

Storage  
[Pages 21-26]

I do this

Hot Hold/Display  
[Pages 65-68]

I do this

Preparation  
And Handling  
[Pages 27-37]

I do this

Vacuum Packing  
[Pages 69-72]

I do this

Cold Serve/Display  
[Pages 39-44]

I do this

Transport & Distribution  
[Pages 73-76]

I do this

Defrosting  
[Pages 45-48]

I do this

Physical/Chemical Contamination  
[Pages 77-82]

I do this

Cooking  
[Pages 49-54]

I do this

Food Allergies  
[Pages 83-90]

I do this

Cooling/Freezing  
[Pages 55-60]

I do this

Additional Steps  
[Pages 91-92]

I do this

Note: Physical/Chemical contamination and Food Allergies are hazards that exist at all steps in your business and must be controlled, so always complete these sections on pages 77-89.





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## Premises Layout Plan

This section is a large, empty light blue rectangular area intended for a Premises Layout Plan. It is currently blank, providing space for the user to draw or describe the layout of their premises.

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## Premises Layout Plan



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## Purchase, Delivery/Receipt, Collection and Traceability

### Ordering Food

Think about how much food you are going to prepare and sell and estimate how much of each ingredient you will need. Plan ahead to make sure you have the right amount of stock and order carefully. Follow the first in, first out system of stock rotation so that the older stock is used first.



### Suppliers

**The starting point for making food safely is to be confident about the safety of your raw ingredients and any ready-to-eat products you buy in. In order to make sure that the food you are buying has been handled safely you should choose your suppliers carefully.**

It is a good idea to have a written agreement with your supplier about your delivery requirements including that products should only be delivered during opening hours.

In order to ensure that you use reputable suppliers it is recommended that you ask the following questions:

- Is the business approved or registered with their Enforcement Authority?
- Does the supplier have a food safety management system?
- Do they supply detailed invoices which includes their name and address, details of products supplied including the quantity and batch number?
- Do they have any certification or quality assurance?
- Do they store, transport and pack their goods in a hygienic way and ensure that raw and ready-to-eat foods are separated?

If you have food safety/quality issues with your supplier, you may wish to discuss with your EHO.

### Delivery/Receipt

You should check the temperature of food on delivery to ensure that it is being supplied to you at the correct temperature. Randomly check the temperature of a few items for large deliveries. For vacuum packed products the temperature should be taken by placing the probe of your thermometer between two packs or by using an infrared thermometer.



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If you intend to take the temperature of raw meat/poultry/fish you must use a separate thermometer used only for this purpose. This is to avoid the risk of contamination of ready-to-eat foods.

You should also check to ensure that food:

- is adequately separated to prevent cross-contamination between raw and ready-to-eat foods during delivery
- is within its 'use by' or 'best before' date
- has not gone off
- is not damaged, i.e. dispose of/return any punctured vacuum packs, swollen packs or badly dented cans and check that seals are unbroken
- bears ID/ EC Identification/Health marks on both ready-to-eat and raw food if necessary
- outer packaging is not visibly dirty

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**If you do not think that the food a supplier delivers has been handled safely [for example, if you think it has not been kept at the correct temperature or may have been contaminated] reject the delivery, contact your supplier immediately and record the details [Record on BR1, Page 128].**

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Deliveries should be unloaded in a clean, separate area and hands must be thoroughly washed before handling ready-to-eat food. Delivery personnel should be discouraged from entering the food preparation area.

Outer packaging could have touched dirty floors etc. when it was stored/transported prior to delivery to your premises. **Remove outer packaging from ready-to-eat food and dispose of it before taking into clean areas for storage, handling and preparation.** This helps to prevent spreading bacteria from dirty outer packaging or leaks from deliveries.

If you remove food from its original packaging to another container, make sure you retain the name of the food, the ingredients and the 'use by' or 'best before' date [you may also wish to record a batch code] and any listed allergens.

Put chilled food in the fridge and frozen food in the freezer as soon as it is delivered. If the temperature of chilled food is allowed to rise above 8°C or frozen food allowed to thaw, food poisoning bacteria could grow.

### Manufacturer Temperature Specified

Some manufacturers may specify lower storage temperature to ensure food safety. You must check to ensure that these temperatures are not exceeded on delivery.

### Fresh Raw Fish and Poultry

Fresh raw fish should be delivered to you on ice or at the temperature approaching that of melting ice [0-4°C]. Fresh poultry must also be delivered at less than 4°C. You may wish to occasionally check and record the temperature of fresh raw fish and poultry supplied to you in BR1.

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## Collection

If you buy food e.g. from a cash and carry or retailer, make sure that the vehicle you use to transport it is clean and that you bring chilled and frozen foods back as soon as possible and put straight into a fridge or freezer. You may find it useful to use insulated cool bags/boxes, etc. for smaller quantities to prevent the temperature rising above 8°C during transport. For larger quantities a refrigerated vehicle may be necessary.

You must also ensure that raw and ready-to-eat foods are kept separate to avoid cross-contamination.



## Traceability

Certain requirements concerning traceability are set out in EC Regulation 178/2002.

'Traceability' means the ability to trace and follow a food or food ingredient through all stages of production, processing and distribution.

In addition to the traceability requirements laid down in legislation for fresh beef and veal [as per your Beef & Veal Labelling Recording System/Book] the following general requirements apply.

- As a food business operator you should be able to identify any person who has supplied you with food or food ingredients.
- You should be able to identify other businesses you have supplied with food or food ingredients. This is sometimes referred to as 'one back - one forward'.

You will need to have systems in place to be able to provide this information to your Environmental Health Officer on request. It is therefore good practice to keep all invoices and other delivery records relating to incoming food and food ingredients. **You should keep your supplier and customer lists up to date [see pages 17 and 19].**

Having a good traceability system in place means that more accurate product withdrawals or recalls can be carried out when required. In order to facilitate this, food which you supply to other businesses, should be labelled with a batch code or use by date in addition to other labelling requirements.

You should keep any documentation which proves the quantities and types of food you have supplied to other businesses for example duplicate delivery dockets or invoices.

More information on Traceability and the legal requirements can be found in an FSA publication **Guidance Notes for Food Business Operators on Food Safety, Traceability, Product Withdrawal and Recall [July 2007]** available to download from their website [www.food.gov.uk](http://www.food.gov.uk)

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## Step: Purchase, Delivery/Receipt, Collection and Traceability

Examples of ready-to-eat\* food

What can go wrong here? [Hazards]	What can I do about it? [Control/Critical Limits]	How can I check? [Monitoring/Verification]	What if it's not right? [Corrective Action]
Contamination of food with food poisoning bacteria.	Buy from a reputable supplier and maintain a list of your approved suppliers. <input type="checkbox"/> I do this [Use supplier list on Page 17-18]	Check deliveries have come from suppliers on approved list. <input type="checkbox"/> I do this  Ask supplier to confirm registration with Enforcement Authority. <input type="checkbox"/> I do this  Check EC Identification mark appears on product labelling. <input type="checkbox"/> I do this	Reject food where you think it is unsafe to use and review supplier.
Growth of food poisoning bacteria in cold ready-to-eat food.	Make sure ready-to-eat food is delivered below 8°C or at the temperature specified by the manufacturer <input type="checkbox"/> I do this Specify _____ _____ _____	Check temperature of chilled ready-to-eat foods [including foods that you collect]. <input type="checkbox"/> I do this  [Record on BR1, page 128]	Reject chilled ready-to-eat food if temperature is above 8°C or above temperature specified by the manufacturer.
	Make sure frozen foods are still frozen. <input type="checkbox"/> I do this	Check frozen ready-to-eat food is not defrosting. <input type="checkbox"/> I do this	Reject frozen ready-to-eat food if showing signs of defrosting.
	Make sure that all cold ready-to-eat food is within its use-by-date. <input type="checkbox"/> I do this	Check delivery for date coding. <input type="checkbox"/> I do this  [Record on BR1, Page 128]	Reject food if 'use by' date has passed.

\*Ready-to-eat foods are foods that will not be cooked or reheated before serving. These include prepared salads e.g. coleslaw, cooked meats such as ham and cooked chickens, pies, sandwiches, cheese and foods that have been cooked/prepared in advance to serve cold.



What can go wrong here? [Hazards]	What can I do about it? [Control/Critical Limits]	How can I check? [Monitoring/Verification]	What if it's not right? [Corrective Action]
Cross-contamination from raw to ready-to-eat food.	Keep raw and ready-to-eat foods separate during delivery/receipt/collection. <input type="checkbox"/> I do this	Check raw and ready-to-eat foods are kept separate. Observe staff practices during delivery. <input type="checkbox"/> I do this	Reject food if you think it has been contaminated and is unsafe to use.
	Make sure delivery vehicle is clean. <input type="checkbox"/> I do this	Check that delivery vehicle is clean. <input type="checkbox"/> I do this	
	Make sure food is protected by proper packaging/containers. <input type="checkbox"/> I do this	Check packaging/containers and condition of food for signs of damage and contamination. <input type="checkbox"/> I do this	Reject food which is not protected or is in damaged or dirty packaging or visibly contaminated.
	Remove outer packaging from food before bringing into the clean area**. <input type="checkbox"/> I do this	Check that no outer food packaging has been brought into the clean area <input type="checkbox"/> I do this	More supervision/better training/retraining of staff.

\*\* A clean area is a room or an area within the food premises where only ready-to-eat foods are handled. No raw foods can be handled here. The clean area might be fixed in the same location on a permanent basis or may be set up on a temporary basis following a thorough cleaning and disinfection process of the entire area.









## Storage

### Refrigeration

Certain foods need to be kept chilled to slow down the growth of food poisoning bacteria e.g.

- foods with a 'use by' date
- foods that say 'keep refrigerated' on the label
- foods where the manufacturer's instructions state 'once open keep refrigerated'
- foods you have cooked to sell as ready-to-eat such as whole chickens, roast beef joints
- ready-to-eat foods such as coleslaw, salads, cooked meats, etc.

Make sure that you do not use food after its 'use by' date. If you keep it any longer it might not be safe to eat **and by selling this food you are committing an offence.**

It is important to use equipment properly to make sure food is kept cold enough. Follow the manufacturer's instructions on how to use your fridges. Fridges must not be over-stocked to allow cold air to circulate.

**Remember that chilled food must be kept at 8°C or below. To achieve this, it is recommended that fridges should be set at 5°C or below.**

Follow the food manufacturer's instructions on how to store the food, **including any specific temperature requirements**, as these are designed to keep it safe.

You should check the temperature of your fridges at least once a day. Some equipment will have a display dial to show what temperature it is set at. You can use this to check the temperature of your equipment. If you do this, you should cross check regularly that the temperature shown on the dial is the same as the air temperature of the fridge, measured using a calibrated thermometer.

Do not store food in open tins. Transfer contents to a clean container.

### Fresh Fish

Raw fish should be stored on ice or at the temperature of melting ice [0-4°C]. This can be achieved by placing the fish in or on a bed of crushed ice. Good contact between the ice and fish should be maintained. Alternatively fresh fish may be stored in your fridge used for storage of raw foods. You should ensure that this fridge is capable of storing fish below 4°C.

### Equipment Breakdown

If your fridge breaks down transfer the food to another fridge ensuring that it is not at risk of contamination. If you cannot do this, or you do not know how long the equipment has been broken down, do not use the food and contact your EHO.

If you have frequent problems with your fridges, consider whether it is suitable for your business.



## Cross-contamination

Separating raw and ready-to-eat foods **is essential** to prevent food poisoning bacteria from spreading. Where possible separate fridges/walk-in-chills/freezers should be provided for storing raw and ready-to-eat foods.

If raw and ready-to-eat foods are stored in the same fridge/walk-in-chill always store ready-to-eat foods above raw food in a clearly identifiable part of the fridge used for ready-to-eat foods only.

### You must also:

- Store ready-to-eat foods in such a way as to protect it from contamination by raw food due to the movement of the raw food in and out of the walk-in-chill.
- Ensure that staff clothing or hands do not become contaminated by raw food when loading and unloading fridges/walk-in-chills/freezers.



**If carcasses are hung in your walk-in-chill, you must ensure that you can prevent cross-contamination of ready-to-eat foods from them; otherwise you must store ready-to-eat food separately.**

It is very important to keep ready-to-eat foods covered to help protect it from contamination from food poisoning bacteria such as E coli 0157 and from physical contamination. Suggested food coverings include, plastic boxes with lids or sealable bags. All packaging in contact with food must be food grade.

Other food such as unwashed fruit and vegetables can be a source of food poisoning bacteria and these must be stored separately from ready-to-eat foods.

If you think that ready-to-eat foods have not been kept separate from raw meat/poultry/fish, eggs or unprepared fruit/vegetables during storage you must dispose of this food.

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## Frozen Storage

Frozen food will keep for longer periods as bacteria and/or yeasts will not grow at very cold temperatures. Freezing, however, does not kill bacteria. Freezers should operate to ensure foods are at a temperature of  $-18^{\circ}\text{C}$  or below.

Frozen food should be placed in the freezer as soon as it is delivered. Date codes should be checked regularly and stock rotated. Fresh food which you freeze on your premises should be date-coded by you to make sure that it is used within a satisfactory time period.

You must also keep raw foods separate from ready-to-eat foods in frozen storage by providing separate freezers or by providing an effective partition.

Freezers should be defrosted and cleaned on a regular basis and as recommended by the manufacturer. Freezers must not be over-stocked to allow cold air to circulate.

If frozen food starts to defrost, food poisoning bacteria could grow. If you find that your freezer is not working properly, you should do the following things:

1. **Food that is still frozen** [i.e. hard and icy] should be moved to an alternative freezer. If there is not an alternative freezer, defrost food for use within 24 hours [see Defrosting step, page 45].
2. **Food that has begun to defrost** [i.e. starting to get soft and/or with liquid coming out of it] should be moved to a suitable place, e.g. the appropriate fridge, to continue defrosting for immediate use [see Defrosting step, page 45].
3. **Fully defrosted raw food** [i.e. soft] may be cooked depending on how long it has been above  $8^{\circ}\text{C}$ . After cooking, use the food immediately or chill or freeze it safely straight away. If this is not possible, dispose of it appropriately.
4. **Fully defrosted ready-to-eat food** - determine if the food is safe to use depending on the temperature and time the food has been above  $8^{\circ}\text{C}$ . If in doubt about the safety of the food dispose of it appropriately.
5. **Food that has to be kept frozen** cannot be re-frozen once it has started to defrost. You will have to use it immediately or dispose of it.





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## Room Temperature Storage

Dry foods such as spices should be stored in rooms which are clean, dry and well ventilated. Food should be kept off the floor and placed in covered containers.

Swollen or 'blown' packs can be a sign that bacteria and/or yeasts have grown in food or drinks. Dispose of any punctured vacuum packs, swollen packs, badly dented cans and foods which are out of date.

Fruit and vegetables should be stored off the floor and away from food which is cooked or ready-to-eat to avoid contamination from soil and bacteria.

## Stock Control

Effective stock control is an important part of managing food safety.

**Carry out regular stock checks and dispose of any food that has passed its 'use by' or best before date.**

To keep track of when food should be used or disposed of follow this advice:

- For food you have prepared or cooked, it is a good idea to label packaging or containers.
- Follow the 'first in, first out' system of stock rotation, so that older stock is used first. This helps to avoid waste.
- Train your staff in stock control and make sure they know in what order to use foods.
- Check regularly that stock control is being carried out effectively and that 'use by' dates are checked daily.

**Remember - once a pre-packed high risk product is opened, the original 'use by' date on the packaging may no longer apply. Always follow the manufacturer's storage instructions.**

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## Step: Storage

Examples of ready-to-eat food

What can go wrong here? [Hazards]	What can I do about it? [Control/Critical Limits]	How can I check? [Monitoring/Verification]	What if it's not right? [Corrective Action]
<p>Growth of food poisoning bacteria in cold ready-to-eat food.</p>	<p>Store below 8°C or lower temperature specified by the manufacturer. <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>I do this</p> <p>Specify:</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p>	<p>Measure the temperature of the food by:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• taking the temperature of a 'dummy' food [e.g. pre-packed jelly or water]. <input type="checkbox"/></li> </ul> <p>I do this</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• measuring core or surface temperatures of food in fridge. [When taking a core temperature, wash and disinfect the probe before and after use.] <input type="checkbox"/></li> </ul> <p>I do this</p> <p>[Record on BR2, Page 129]</p> <p>Measure the air temperature by:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• placing a probe thermometer inside the fridge. <input type="checkbox"/></li> </ul> <p>I do this</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• looking at the temperature of the display gauge [Cross-check periodically using a probe thermometer and record on BR2]. <input type="checkbox"/></li> </ul> <p>I do this</p> <p>[Record on BR2, Page 129]</p>	<p>If temperatures of food are recorded above 8°C or manufacturer's specified temperature, then:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• decide if food is safe to use and dispose of if necessary. This will depend on the temperature and time the food has spent above 8°C. Contact EHO for advice if necessary.</li> <li>• where possible, transfer food to another fridge. Store correctly to avoid cross-contamination.</li> <li>• check the operation of the fridge and adjust if necessary. Re-check temperature and record.</li> <li>• if a temperature of less than 8°C cannot be achieved, call engineer.</li> <li>• Dispose of food</li> </ul>
	<p>Make sure high risk food is date-coded, including food which is prepared on the premises. <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>I do this</p> <p>Rotate stock to make sure food is not kept too long. <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>I do this</p>	<p>Examine date codes daily. [Record on BR5, Page 132 on a regular basis] <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>I do this</p>	<p>Dispose of food once its date code has passed.</p>

What can go wrong here? [Hazards]	What can I do about it? [Control/Critical Limits]	How can I check? [Monitoring/Verification]	What if it's not right? [Corrective Action]
Contamination of cold ready-to-eat food with food poisoning bacteria.	<p>Store ready-to-eat food apart from raw food by providing a separate fridge/freezer. <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>I do this</p> <p>OR</p> <p>Store ready-to-eat food above and well separated from raw food in a clearly identifiable area in the fridge/freezer. <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>I do this</p> <p>Keep food covered in the fridge/freezer. <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>I do this</p>	<p>Regularly check how food is stored. <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>I do this</p> <p>[Record on BR5, Page 132 on a regular basis]</p>	Dispose of ready-to-eat food if it may have been contaminated.

## Preparation and Handling

### Preventing cross-contamination

Cross-contamination occurs when the harmful bacteria that are present on raw foods such as raw meat and unwashed fruit and vegetables are transferred onto other foods or surfaces. These surfaces may include worktops, equipment, hands or utensils.

Cross-contamination can occur in 2 ways;

1. Direct cross-contamination where there is direct contact between raw and ready-to-eat food.
2. Indirect cross-contamination where bacteria pass from raw food to ready-to-eat food via contaminated work surfaces, hands, equipment or utensils.

**Some types of bacteria such as E coli 0157 can be very harmful to humans because very small numbers can cause serious illness and even death.** There is no safe level of these bacteria and as E coli 0157 can survive during refrigeration and freezing it can be difficult to control once present. For these reasons, every care must be taken within your business to avoid E coli 0157 entering your premises and contaminating ready-to-eat foods.

Foods which are likely to be a source of contamination include:

- Raw meat
- Unwashed fruit and vegetables, especially those that are visibly dirty. Unless supplied pre-packed and labelled as 'ready-to-eat' all fruit and vegetables should be thoroughly washed in clean water before eating. Peeling and cooking are additional methods of ensuring they are safe.
- Other raw foods such as fish, shellfish and eggs.

**To prevent cross-contamination you must ensure that raw foods and ready-to-eat foods are adequately separated at all times during handling, storage, preparation, cooking, cooling and service. The most effective way to do this is by complete physical separation.**



**Physical Separation** is where the business has provided physically separate rooms or work areas, equipment, utensils, storage and/or staff for raw and ready-to-eat food handling activities.

This may be achieved by designating a room [or rooms] or work area within the premises for the storage, handling and preparation of ready-to-eat foods only. This area is known as the '**clean area**'. The work surfaces, equipment and utensils in this area must only be used for ready-to-eat foods. It is a good idea to colour code them to ensure that staff can easily identify them. Raw foods or equipment and utensils used for raw foods should never enter this area. Separate staff for ready-to-eat foods should be employed to work in the clean area.



If it is not possible to have a permanent clean area, then a **temporary clean area** must be designated for handling ready-to-eat foods with strict **alternative controls**, such as hand washing and cleaning and disinfection, in place to manage cross-contamination.

### Alternative Controls

In some food premises where it is not possible to provide complete separation, the risk of cross-contamination can be controlled by using alternative controls, such as cleaning, disinfection or hand washing. However, they must only be used in the following circumstances;

- **Non food contact surfaces** such as worktops [food is not to be in direct contact with a worktop], walls which may be subject to splashes from food, shared cash registers and wash hand basins. The surfaces should be smooth, impervious and easy to clean.
- Sharing of **sinks for disinfection of food and equipment** where the sinks and fittings are washed and disinfected between uses. [Ready-to-eat food should never be in direct contact with the sink].
- Use of the same **staff for handling both raw and ready-to-eat foods**. This situation requires strict supervision to check that staff movement from raw areas to ready-to-eat areas is kept to an absolute minimum and thorough handwashing and changing of protective clothing takes place. Food business operators must ensure that the practices are effective in controlling cross-contamination and are implemented to a consistently high standard. Use the **Alternative Controls Record sheet on** Page 31 to record measures which have been implemented to control cross-contamination.

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## Equipment and Utensils

Some items of equipment used in butchery operations are considered to be **'complex equipment'**, as they are composed of a number of surfaces and components, which makes thorough cleaning difficult between uses.

Examples of complex equipment includes:

- Vacuum packers
- Slicers
- Mincers
- Weighing scales
- Food mixers
- Heat sealers
- Probe thermometers

**'Complex equipment'** must NEVER be used for both raw and ready-to-eat foods even if used at different times. **Separate complex equipment must be provided for use for ready-to-eat foods in clean areas.**

Other equipment such as chopping boards, containers or utensils should be designated for use for either raw or ready-to-eat foods. You cannot change the use of such items between raw and ready-to-eat foods UNLESS they can be disinfected between uses or other form of heat disinfection.



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### Slicing cooked meat

Avoid handling the cooked meat as much as possible. It is a good idea to slice cooked meat straight onto the display tray or the plastic film/paper you will use to wrap it as hands can easily spread food poisoning bacteria onto the food. Cooked meats must never be left on the slicer at room temperature after slicing.



### Preparing vegetables and salad ingredients

The dirt on vegetables and salad ingredients can contain food poisoning bacteria. When preparing fruit, vegetables and salad ingredients:

- Peel, trim, or remove the outer parts, as appropriate.
- Wash them thoroughly by agitating in clean water and finally rinse under clean water. Avoid contact with the sink by placing them in a bowl or colander.
- If you have prepared vegetables that have dirt or soil on the outside, clean and disinfect sinks and work surfaces before preparing other foods. Separate chopping boards are required for raw fruit and vegetables and those that are ready-to-eat.
- Do not re-wash vegetables supplied as ready-to-eat as this may re-contaminate the food.

### Helpful hints

- Try to limit the number of staff that handle raw food.
- Try to reduce handling of raw food by using utensils, tongs or disposable gloves, together with adequate handwashing. It is a good idea to use colour coded utensils.
- Consider buying in raw foods already prepared which require little handling or preparation. This could save time and money.



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## Alternative Controls Record sheet

Areas	Alternative Controls [such as cleaning and disinfection, personal hygiene and handling practices and appropriate use of clothing and aprons]
Non food contact surfaces	
Sinks for disinfection of equipment used for raw and ready-to-eat food	
Staff who handle raw and ready-to-eat foods	

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## Step: Preparation and Handling

Examples of ready-to-eat food

What can go wrong here? [Hazards]	What can I do about it? [Control/Critical Limits]	How can I check? [Monitoring/Verification]	What if it's not right? [Corrective Action]
<p>Growth of food poisoning bacteria in ready-to-eat food.</p>	<p>Time the food spends outside the fridge should be as short as possible. <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>I do this</p> <p>Take out small quantities of food from fridge at a time. <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>I do this</p>	<p>Look at staff practices. <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>I do this</p> <p>[Record on BR5, Page 132 on a regular basis]</p>	<p>Consider if the food is safe to use. Dispose of unsafe food.</p> <p>More supervision/ better training/ re-training of staff.</p>
<p>Contamination of ready-to-eat food with food poisoning bacteria that may be on raw food, surfaces, chopping boards, knives, utensils, equipment and packaging.</p>	<p>Provide a separate clean room[s] for ready-to-eat foods only. <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>I do this</p> <p>OR</p> <p>Provide a <b>permanent</b> *clean area for handling/preparation of ready-to-eat foods. <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>I do this</p> <p>OR</p> <p>Provide a <b>temporary</b> clean area for handling/preparation of ready-to-eat foods. <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>I do this</p> <p>[*refer to Alternative Controls on page 28]</p>	<p>Check that clean room or clean area is only used for ready-to-eat food. <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>I do this</p> <p>[Record on BR5, Page 132 on a regular basis]</p>	<p>More supervision/ better training/ re-training of staff.</p> <p>Dispose of potentially contaminated food.</p> <p>More supervision/ better training/ re-training of staff.</p>

What can go wrong here? [Hazards]	What can I do about it? [Control/Critical Limits]	How can I check? [Monitoring/Verification]	What if it's not right? [Corrective Action]
	<p>Use separate clean **complex equipment such as vacuum packers, weighing scales, slicers, mincers for raw and ready-to-eat food.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>I do this</p>	<p>Check that separate complex equipment is used for raw and ready-to-eat foods and correctly located.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>I do this</p>	<p>Dispose of any contaminated food.</p>
	<p>Use separate clearly distinguishable [e.g. colour coded] chopping boards, tongs, knives or other utensils for raw and ready-to-eat foods.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>I do this</p> <p>OR</p>	<p>Check that separate chopping boards, tongs, knives or other utensils are being used correctly and correctly located.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>I do this</p> <p>[Record on BR5, Page 132 on a regular basis]</p>	<p>More training and better supervision of staff.</p>
	<p>Use a dishwasher to clean and disinfect chopping boards, knives, utensils, tongs etc., if separate ones are not available.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>I do this</p> <p>OR</p> <p>Other heat disinfection method.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>I do this</p>	<p>Check that the dishwasher is in good working order, well maintained and serviced regularly and used in accordance with manufacturer's instructions.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>I do this</p>	<p>Re-wash the chopping boards, knives, utensils, etc., and service or replace the dishwasher.</p>
	<p>Specify:</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p>		

What can go wrong here? [Hazards]	What can I do about it? [Control/Critical Limits]	How can I check? [Monitoring/Verification]	What if it's not right? [Corrective Action]
	<p>Ensure wrapping and packaging materials e.g. cling film, plastic bags etc., for use with ready-to-eat foods are stored and used in the clean areas only <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>I do this</p>	<p>Check wrapping and packaging materials are being stored and used correctly and in the correct location. <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>I do this</p>	<p>Dispose of contaminated packaging or use for raw food if appropriate. More supervision/better training/re-training of staff.</p>
<p>Contamination of ready-to-eat food with food poisoning bacteria that may be on hands or staff clothing.</p>	<p>Use separate staff for preparation/handling of raw and ready-to-eat food. <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>I do this</p> <p>OR</p> <p>Ensure staff remove contaminated clothing and wash their hands using an effective technique before handling ready-to-eat food/equipment/utensils or entering a clean area. <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>I do this</p> <p>[*refer to Alternative Controls on page 28]</p> <p>Use colour coded disposable aprons for different activities. <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>I do this</p> <p>Handle food as little as possible by using tongs, etc. <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>I do this</p>	<p>Check that staff are working in the correct area. <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>I do this</p> <p>[Record on BR5, Page 132 on a regular basis]</p> <p>Train all staff in the effective hand washing technique [see page 117] and observe staff practices while they are handling food. <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>I do this</p> <p>[Record on BR5, Page 132 on a regular basis]</p> <p>Look at staff practices. <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>I do this</p> <p>[Record on BR5, Page 132 on a regular basis]</p>	<p>More supervision/better training/re-training of staff.</p> <p>More supervision/better training/re-training of staff.</p>

What can go wrong here? [Hazards]	What can I do about it? [Control/Critical Limits]	How can I check? [Monitoring/Verification]	What if it's not right? [Corrective Action]
	Use disposable gloves correctly where appropriate. <input type="checkbox"/> I do this		
Contamination of ready-to-eat food with food poisoning bacteria that maybe on cleaning materials including cloths and sponges.	Use single use disposable cloths/ roll in clean areas where ready-to-eat foods are handled. <input type="checkbox"/> I do this  OR Reusable cloths etc. are to be washed in a boil wash. <input type="checkbox"/> I do this	Check disposable cleaning cloths/roll is being disposed of after use. <input type="checkbox"/> I do this  Check that cloths are being washed in a boil wash. <input type="checkbox"/> I do this  [Record on BR5, Page 132 on a regular basis]	More supervision/ better training/re-training of staff.  Where necessary replace/service washing machine, change laundry supplier.
Contamination of ready-to-eat fruit and vegetables with food poisoning bacteria [e.g. from soil].	Trim and wash fruit & vegetables thoroughly. [unless supplied bagged and ready to use]. <input type="checkbox"/> I do this	Look at the food. Check the label. <input type="checkbox"/> I do this	Wash more thoroughly or dispose of.
	Use separate clearly distinguishable [e.g. colour coded] chopping boards, and utensils for ready-to-eat fruit and vegetables. <input type="checkbox"/> I do this  OR Use a dishwasher to clean and disinfect chopping boards, knives, utensils, tongs, etc., if separate equipment is not available. <input type="checkbox"/> I do this	Ensure separate equipment and utensils are being used for ready-to-eat fruit and vegetables. <input type="checkbox"/> I do this  Check that the dishwasher is in good working order, well maintained and serviced regularly and used in accordance with manufacturer's instructions. <input type="checkbox"/> I do this	Dispose of any contaminated food. More training and better supervision of staff.  Re-wash the chopping boards, knives, utensils, etc., and service or replace the dishwasher.

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**\*A 'Clean area'** is a room or an area within the food business where only ready-to-eat foods are handled. No raw foods can be handled here. The clean area might be fixed in the same location on a permanent basis or may be set up on a temporary basis following a thorough cleaning and disinfection of the entire area. A temporary clean area should include clean storage facilities for storing equipment and packaging for ready-to-eat foods when the temporary clean area is not in use.

**\*\*Complex equipment** is the term given to those items of equipment that can not be adequately cleaned to ensure complete disinfection over all surfaces and components. This is because it is hard to access all parts of the equipment and therefore detailed cleaning required would not be practically possible. For these reasons complex equipment provided for use with ready-to-eat food must never be used for raw food.

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## Cold Serve/Display

### Refrigeration

Certain foods need to be kept chilled to slow down the growth of food poisoning bacteria e.g.

- foods with a 'use by' date
- foods that say 'keep refrigerated' on the label
- foods you have cooked to sell as ready-to-eat such as whole chickens, roast beef joints
- ready-to-eat foods such as coleslaw, salads and cooked meats, etc.

If these types of food are not kept cold enough food poisoning bacteria could grow.

It is important to use equipment properly to make sure food is kept cold enough. Follow the manufacturer's instructions on how to use fridges and chilled display equipment.

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**Remember that chilled food must be kept at 8°C or below or as specified by the manufacturer. To achieve this, it is recommended that fridges or chilled display equipment should be set at 5°C or below.**

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You should check the temperature of your chilled display equipment at least once per day, remembering the following points:

- Switch on and pre-cool display unit before you put cold food in it.
- Only display as much food as you think you will need.

Some equipment will have a digital or display dial to show what the temperature it is set at. You can use this to check the temperature of your equipment. If you do this, you should cross check regularly that the temperature shown on the display/dial is the same as the calibrated thermometer.

### Equipment Breakdown

If your fridge or display equipment breaks down, use other equipment or suitable cold storage. If you cannot do this, or you do not know how long the equipment has been broken down, dispose of the food [you may wish to contact your EHO for advice]. Refer to advice section on waste control page 110 for information on disposal of raw meat.

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## Displaying food out of chilled storage

Chilled food must be kept at 8°C or below, however the law allows for food to be displayed above 8°C for sale or service for only **one** period of up to 4 hours. After this time, you should either put the food back in the fridge and keep it at 8°C or below until it is used, or dispose of it.

If you do take food out of chilled storage to display it, remember not to mix new food with the food that is already on display. This could lead to the older food being left out for too long.



## Avoiding Cross-contamination

It is important to avoid contamination of ready-to-eat food on display for sale. Remember the following points:

- Ensure complete separation between ready-to-eat food and raw food. If possible store in separate display cabinets. Use separate scales and consider the use of different coloured or types of trays.
- If it is not possible to provide a separate cash register appropriate measures must be taken to prevent the spread of bacteria. If it is kept in the clean area, care must be taken to ensure it is not contaminated by staff coming from areas outside the clean area. Similarly if it is kept outside the clean area, staff coming from the clean area must ensure their hands and clothing are clean after using the cash register before returning to the clean area.
- If possible use separate staff to handle raw and ready-to-eat food. Always ensure that staff wash their hands thoroughly using the appropriate method before serving ready-to-eat food. If separate staff are not available, refer to **Alternative Controls** on page 28.
- Introduce staff practices which will eliminate hand contact with ready-to-eat foods [e.g. use of tongs and disposable gloves]. If using gloves, make sure staff refer to advice section on Personal Hygiene, Page 115.
- Use separate aprons for staff handling raw and ready-to-eat foods. Aprons should be changed when moving between these areas. Consider using disposable aprons.
- Store equipment used to handle raw food separate from equipment used for ready-to-eat food, ideally in their dedicated area.
- Remove food from display fridges while cleaning and disinfecting the inside of such units.
- Avoid the use of artificial garnish or decorations in the cabinet which can be difficult to clean effectively.
- Wrapping and packing materials for ready-to-eat foods should be stored in a clean area.
- Consider special arrangements for the display and handling of any allergy free foods [Refer to advice section on Food Allergies, Page 83].



## Step: Cold Serve/Display

Examples of ready-to-eat food

What can go wrong here? [Hazards]	What can I do about it? [Control/Critical Limits]	How can I check? [Monitoring/Verification]	What if it's not right? [Corrective Action]
<p>Growth of food poisoning bacteria in ready-to-eat food.</p>	<p>Display below 8°C or at manufacturer's specified temperature. <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>I do this</p>	<p>Measure the temperature of food in the display unit by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Taking the temperature of a 'dummy' food [e.g. pre-packed jelly or water]. <input type="checkbox"/></li> </ul> <p>I do this</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Measuring the core or surface temperatures of food on display [when taking a core temperature wash and disinfect the probe before and after use]. <input type="checkbox"/></li> </ul> <p>I do this</p> <p>[Record on BR2, Page 129]</p> <p>Measure the air temperature by:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• placing a thermometer probe inside the unit. <input type="checkbox"/></li> </ul> <p>I do this</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• looking at the temperature of the display gauge [Cross check periodically using a temperature probe]. <input type="checkbox"/></li> </ul> <p>I do this</p> <p>[Record on BR2, Page 129]</p>	<p>Where possible transfer food to another fridge. Store correctly to avoid cross-contamination.</p> <p>If temperature of food is recorded above 8°C, then:-</p> <p>Dispose of the food if above 8°C for over 4 hours or if time period unknown.</p> <p>Check the operation of the fridge and adjust if necessary.</p> <p>If a temperature of less than 8°C cannot be achieved call engineer.</p>
	<p>If food is not displayed below 8°C restrict display period to less than 4 hours.* <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>I do this</p> <p>* The law requires that food can be displayed above 8°C for sale or service for only one period of up to 4 hours.</p>	<p>Check length of time on display. <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>I do this</p>	<p>Dispose of any food displayed above 8°C for more than 4 hours.</p>

What can go wrong here? [Hazards]	What can I do about it? [Control/Critical Limits]	How can I check? [Monitoring/Verification]	What if it's not right? [Corrective Action]
	<p>Mark high risk foods with a 'use by' date including food prepared on the premises. <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>I do this</p> <p>Rotate stock to make sure food is not kept too long. <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>I do this</p>	<p>Check date codes daily. Refer to delivery and cooking records. <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>I do this</p> <p>[Record on BR5, Page 132 on a regular basis]</p>	<p>Dispose of food once it has passed its 'use by' date.</p>
<p>Contamination of ready-to-eat food with food poisoning bacteria that may be on raw food, surfaces, chopping boards, knives, utensils, equipment and packaging</p>	<p>Display raw and ready-to-eat foods separately by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- using separate display units <input type="checkbox"/></li> </ul> <p>I do this</p> <p>OR</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- using one unit with a physical division <input type="checkbox"/></li> </ul> <p>I do this</p>	<p>Look at food on display <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>I do this</p> <p>[Record on BR5 page 132]</p>	<p>Dispose of ready-to-eat food which may have been contaminated.</p>
	<p>Use separate staff for serving of raw and ready-to-eat food <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>I do this</p> <p>OR</p> <p>Ensure staff remove contaminated clothing and wash their hands using an effective technique before handling ready-to-eat food/equipment/utensils <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>I do this</p> <p>[*refer to Alternative Controls on page 28]</p>	<p>Look at staff practices. <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>I do this</p> <p>[Record on BR5, Page 132 on a regular basis]</p> <p>Train all staff in the effective hand washing technique [see page 117 and observe staff practices while they are handling food.</p>	<p>More supervision/better training/retraining of staff.</p> <p>More supervision/better training/retraining of staff.</p>



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<b>What can go wrong here?</b> [Hazards]	<b>What can I do about it?</b> [Control/Critical Limits]	<b>How can I check?</b> [Monitoring/Verification]	<b>What if it's not right?</b> [Corrective Action]
	Ensure food is protected and/ or covered where appropriate e.g. sneeze guards or covers. <input type="checkbox"/> I do this		

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## Defrosting

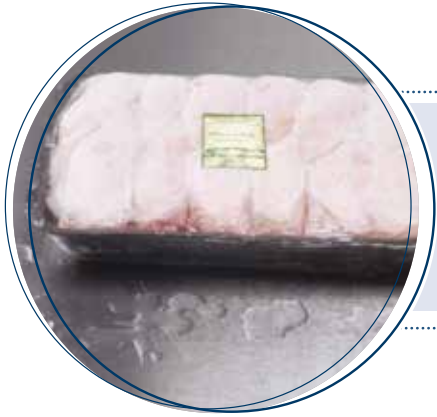
Food poisoning bacteria can grow in food that is not defrosted properly. It must be thoroughly defrosted before cooking [unless the manufacturer's instructions tell you to cook from frozen]. If food is still frozen or partially frozen, it will take longer to cook. The outside of the food could be cooked, but the centre might not be, which means it could contain food poisoning bacteria.



Keep raw food separate from ready-to-eat food and suitably contained when it is defrosting, to prevent cross-contamination. Once ready-to-eat food has been defrosted it should be used within 24 hours or follow manufacturer's instructions.

### Options for defrosting food

1. Putting food in the fridge will keep it at a safe temperature while it is defrosting. Ideally, plan ahead to leave enough time and space to defrost food in the fridge.  
**Ready-to-eat foods should always be defrosted in a designated ready-to-eat fridge or above raw food.**
2. A fast way to defrost food is in the microwave on the 'defrost' setting. This method is not recommended for foods which will not be cooked immediately as the temperature of the outside of the food may rise allowing food poisoning bacteria to grow.
3. You could also defrost food at room temperature. Foods will defrost quite quickly at room temperature, but food poisoning bacteria could grow if the food gets too warm while defrosting.  
**This method is not recommended for ready-to-eat foods which will not be cooked or reheated after defrosting. Defrost these foods in the fridge.**
4. For bought in foods, e.g. pies, follow the manufacturer's defrosting instructions.



### Checking

When you think food has defrosted, it is important to check to make sure. The outside may look defrosted but the inside could still be frozen.

#### 1. Check for ice in the food.



#### 2. With raw poultry, check the joints are flexible.

#### If food has not fully defrosted:

- Continue to defrost the food until there is no ice left. Test again before cooking or reheating.
- Speed up the defrosting process e.g. by using a microwave.

#### If you are having problems in defrosting food consider the following:

- Change your defrosting method and make it safer, e.g. defrost smaller amounts.
- Make sure you allow enough time to defrost.
- Train staff again on safe methods of defrosting.
- If you defrost lots of food in your business you may wish to consider creating extra fridge space.

## Step: Defrosting

Examples of ready-to-eat food

What can go wrong here? [Hazards]	What can I do about it? [Control/Critical Limits]	How can I check? [Monitoring/Verification]	What if it's not right? [Corrective Action]
<p>Growth of food poisoning bacteria.</p>	<p>Make sure that frozen foods are thoroughly defrosted before cooking - unless the manufacturer states otherwise.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><input type="checkbox"/> I do this</p>	<p>Ensure that foods are fully defrosted by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• checking for ice in the food <input type="checkbox"/> I do this</li> <li>• with raw poultry, check the joints are flexible. <input type="checkbox"/> I do this</li> </ul>	<p>Defrost for a longer period.</p>
	<p>Make sure defrosted food if not used immediately is date coded and refrigerated.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><input type="checkbox"/> I do this</p>	<p>Check date coding to ensure food is not kept too long.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><input type="checkbox"/> I do this</p>	
<p>Cross-contamination from raw to ready-to-eat food.</p>	<p>Defrost ready-to-eat food apart from raw food in a separate fridge.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><input type="checkbox"/> I do this</p> <p>OR</p> <p>Defrost ready-to-eat food above and well separated from raw food in a clearly identifiable area of the fridge.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><input type="checkbox"/> I do this</p>	<p>Regularly check how food is defrosted.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><input type="checkbox"/> I do this</p> <p>[Record on BR5, Page 132]</p>	<p>Dispose of ready-to-eat foods which may be contaminated.</p> <p>Clean and disinfect contaminated areas.</p> <p>Review staff training.</p>





## Cooking

Thorough cooking is essential to ensure that dangerous bacteria that may be present in the food are killed, making food safe to eat.

### Safe cooking tips

- Preheat equipment such as ovens and grills before cooking. If you use equipment before it has preheated, food will take longer to cook. This means that recommended cooking times in recipes or manufacturer's instructions might not be long enough to ensure that 75°C or above has been achieved.
- If cooking batches of meat [chicken, rolled joints, stuffed products, etc.], ensure each product is of similar size/weight. If different sizes are used, ensure temperature checks are carried out on the largest item.
- Check that poultry is cooked properly in the thickest part of the leg. The meat should not be pink or red and the juices should not have any pink or red in them.



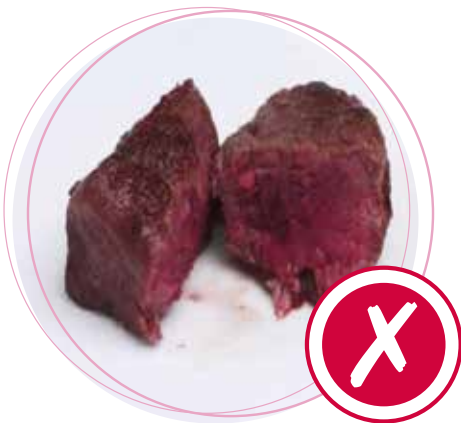
- Check that sausages and burgers are thoroughly cooked and piping hot all the way through with no pink or red in the centre. This is because they may have bacteria spread throughout. Whole cuts of pork should also be thoroughly cooked.



- Check that liquid dishes bubble rapidly when you stir them. This is to make sure the food is hot enough to cook it thoroughly and kill food poisoning bacteria. Stir liquid dishes frequently. This is to help make sure the food is the same temperature all the way through, with no cold spots.



- The largest piece of meat in stews, curries etc. should be piping hot all the way through with no pink or red in the centre.



- Check that combination dishes are piping hot [steaming] in the centre. If you are cooking a large dish or batch, check in several places. [Remember large dishes or batches require a longer cooking time].
- To check a pork joint or rolled meat joint, insert a clean skewer into the centre until juices run out. The juices should not have any pink or red in them.



**It is good practice to occasionally verify temperatures with a probe thermometer.**

## Step: Cooking

Examples of ready-to-eat\* food

What can go wrong here? [Hazards]	What can I do about it? [Control/Critical Limits]	How can I check? [Monitoring/Verification]	What if it's not right? [Corrective Action]
Survival of food poisoning bacteria if food is not properly cooked.	<p>Cook food thoroughly to kill food poisoning bacteria e.g.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• cook to 75°C or hotter. <input type="checkbox"/> I do this</li> <li>• specify cooking time/oven temperature to ensure food reaches 75°C. <input type="checkbox"/> I do this</li> </ul> <p>[Use equipment time/temperature combinations form on page 53]</p>	<p>Use a probe thermometer for ready-to-eat food to measure the temperature of the thickest part of the food. [Wash and disinfect the probe before and after use] <input type="checkbox"/> I do this</p> <p>[Record on BR3, Page 130]</p> <p>Cross-check regularly using a probe thermometer for ready-to-eat food to measure the temperature of the thickest part of the food. [Wash and disinfect the probe before and after use]. <input type="checkbox"/> I do this</p> <p>[Record on BR3, Page 130]</p>	<p>Cook the food for longer until the thickest part reaches 75°C.</p> <p>Review your cooking method. You might need to increase the time or temperature or use different equipment.</p> <p>Update Equipment Time/ Temperature Combinations form on page53].</p> <p>Repair/replace equipment.</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• follow manufacturers instructions <input type="checkbox"/> I do this</li> <li>• Use visual checks and rely on experience <input type="checkbox"/> I do this</li> </ul>	<p>Cross check regularly using a probe thermometer for ready-to-eat food to measure the temperature of the thickest part of the food. [Wash and disinfect the probe before and after use] <input type="checkbox"/> I do this.</p> <p>[Record on BR3, Page 130]</p> <p>Ensure the food is properly cooked by checking that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Poultry is fully cooked in thickest part of leg [no pink or red meat/juices]. <input type="checkbox"/> I do this</li> <li>• Processed meat products e.g. sausages/ burgers and whole cuts of pork are piping hot right through with no pink or red in centre. <input type="checkbox"/> I do this</li> </ul>	<p>Cook the food for longer until the thickest part reaches 75°C.</p> <p>Review manufacturers instructions.</p> <p>Continue cooking.</p> <p>Review your cooking method.</p>

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What can go wrong here? [Hazards]	What can I do about it? [Control/Critical Limits]	How can I check? [Monitoring/Verification]	What if it's not right? [Corrective Action]
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Liquids bubble rapidly when stirred <input type="checkbox"/> I do this</li><li>• The largest piece of meat in stews, curries, etc., should be piping hot all the way through with no pink or red in the centre. <input type="checkbox"/> I do this</li></ul>	

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## Cooling/Freezing

### Cooling/Chilling Hot Foods

Food poisoning bacteria can grow in food that is left to cool slowly. **If you have cooked food that you will not serve immediately, cool it down as quickly as possible and then put it in the fridge/freezer within 2 hours. For larger joints and whole birds a longer initial cooling period may be required. If cooled foods are not to be used straight away they should be date coded to ensure that they are not kept too long.**

Do not put foods that are not sufficiently cooled into the fridge as this may raise the temperature of the fridge and cause condensation. Do not put hot food into the freezer.

**REMEMBER: It is important to protect food from contamination at all times while cooling and chilling whatever method you use. FOOD MUST BE PLACED IN A CLEAN AREA TO COOL. [See Preparation and Handling section for advice]**

**If food has not been cooled down safely it must be disposed of.**

### Options for cooling/chilling down food

[You can use one or more of these options]

1. Use a blast chiller to chill down food especially if you chill down lots of food in your business. A blast chiller is specially designed to chill down hot foods quickly and safely.



2. Remove food from cooking container and divide food into smaller portions or clean shallow containers. Smaller amounts of food cool down more quickly.

3. Place pans of hot food in cold water ensuring that the food is not contaminated. The cold water makes the contents of the pans cool more quickly.

4. While food is cooling down, stir regularly with a clean utensil. Stirring helps food cool more evenly.

5. Move hot food to a colder area [e.g. a clean area] for a period of no more than 2 hours. Food will cool more quickly in a colder area.





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### Comparing different cooling/chilling options

If you would like to compare different cooling/chilling options, try them out with the same food. You will only need to do this once. When you have just cooked the food, use a probe thermometer for ready-to-eat food to test its temperature. Then test the temperature again at regular intervals to find out how fast the food is being cooled down. Remember to use a clean probe each time you check the food. Repeat the process with different cooling/chilling options to find out which is most effective.

#### If you are having problems cooling food consider the following:

- Review your cooling methods and change method of cooling if necessary.
- Avoid cooking large quantities of food in advance. Large quantities of food are more difficult to cool down quickly, especially solid food.
- If you chill down large quantities of hot food in your business a blast chiller is recommended.
- Make sure you always allow enough time and make portions small enough.
- Train staff again.
- Improve staff supervision.

### Cooling Rice

It is essential to handle rice safely to make sure it is safe to eat. Uncooked rice can contain spores of *Bacillus cereus*, bacteria that can cause food poisoning.

When the rice is cooked, make sure you keep it hot until serving or chill it down as quickly as possible, within 2 hours, and then keep it in the fridge. When the rice is cooked, the spores can survive. If the cooked rice is left standing at room temperature, the bacteria could start growing again from the spores. These bacteria will multiply and may produce toxins [poisons] that cause vomiting or diarrhoea. Reheating the rice won't get rid of these toxins. You can cool rice down more quickly by dividing it into smaller portions or spreading it out on a clean tray.



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## Freezing



Bacteria can survive the freezing process and will begin to grow again when the food is defrosting. If you are freezing food, freeze it as soon as it has been prepared [ie. within 2 hours]. Freeze food as soon as it has been properly cooled down. The longer you wait before freezing food, the greater the chance of food poisoning bacteria growing.

Divide food into smaller portions and put it into food grade containers or freezer bags before freezing. Smaller portions will freeze [and defrost] more quickly. The centre of larger portions takes longer to freeze, allowing food poisoning bacteria to grow.

For dishes you have prepared or cooked for freezing, it is a good idea to label the packaging or container, to record the date of freezing. This will help you with stock rotation.

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## Step: Cooling/Freezing

Examples of ready-to-eat food

What can go wrong here? [Hazards]	What can I do about it? [Control/Critical Limits]	How can I check? [Monitoring/Verification]	What if it's not right? [Corrective Action]
	<p>Reduce the temperature of cooked food to below 8°C as quickly as possible by:</p> <p>Specify method:</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p>	<p>Look at where and how food is cooled.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><input type="checkbox"/></p> <p style="text-align: right;">I do this</p> <p>[Record on BR5, Page 132]</p>	<p>Improve cooling procedures/facilities.</p>
	<p>Within *2 hours of cooking, cover, label and place food in:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Storage Fridge <input type="checkbox"/> I do this</li> <li>- Walk in chill <input type="checkbox"/> I do this</li> <li>- Blast chiller <input type="checkbox"/> I do this</li> <li>- Freezer <input type="checkbox"/> I do this</li> </ul> <p>*If food such as larger joints and whole birds e.g. turkeys require a longer initial cooling period, specify time:</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p>	<p>Check times</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><input type="checkbox"/></p> <p style="text-align: right;">I do this</p> <p>[Record on BR3, Page 130 on a regular basis]</p>	<p>Dispose of any cooked food that has not been cooled safely.</p>

What can go wrong here? [Hazards]	What can I do about it? [Control/Critical Limits]	How can I check? [Monitoring/Verification]	What if it's not right? [Corrective Action]
Cross-contamination of cooked food with food poisoning bacteria.	Cool food in a clean area away from sources of contamination. <input type="checkbox"/> I do this	Look at where and how food is cooled. <input type="checkbox"/> I do this  [Record on BR5, Page 132]	Dispose of food which may have been contaminated.
	Food handlers must observe good standards of personal hygiene in order to avoid contamination especially if food has to be handled while still warm [bacteria will multiply more rapidly in warm food]. <input type="checkbox"/> I do this	Look at staff practices. <input type="checkbox"/> I do this  [Record on BR5, Page 132]	More supervision/ better training/ retraining of staff.

## Reheating

Reheating means cooking again, not just warming up. Always reheat food until it is piping hot all the way through [you should only do this once].

Make sure you use equipment that reheats food effectively and follow the equipment manufacturer's instructions. If equipment is not suitable for reheating, or is not used properly, the food might not get hot enough to kill bacteria.

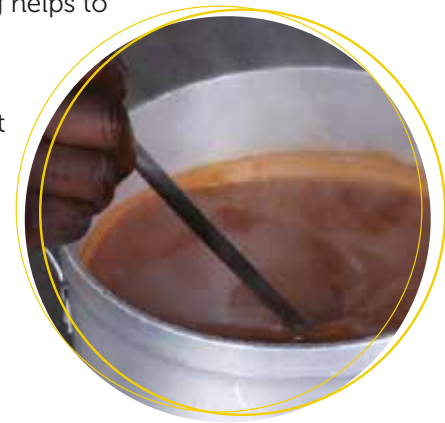


Establish the appropriate equipment setting and time combination for individual products to ensure the food reaches a core temperature of 75°C [use form on page 53]. Remember to cross check regularly using your calibrated probe for ready-to-eat foods.

Preheat equipment such as ovens and grills before reheating. Food will take longer to reheat if you use equipment before it has preheated. This means that recommended reheating times in recipes or manufacturer's instructions might not be long enough.

If you are reheating food in a microwave, follow the product manufacturer's instructions, including advice on standing and stirring. The manufacturer has tested their instructions to make sure that products will be properly reheated. When food is microwaved, it can be very hot at the edges and still be cold in the centre - stirring helps to prevent this.

Serve reheated food immediately, unless it is going straight into hot holding. If food is not served immediately, the temperature will drop and food poisoning bacteria could grow.



Check that reheated food is piping hot [steaming] all the way through.



If you are having problems reheating food consider the following:

- Check that your equipment is working correctly.
- Review your reheating method - you may need to increase the time and/or temperature, use different equipment or change the size of portions.
- Train staff again on this safe method.
- Improve staff supervision.

## Step: Reheating

Examples of ready-to-eat food

What can go wrong here? [Hazards]	What can I do about it? [Control/Critical Limits]	How can I check? [Monitoring/Verification]	What if it's not right? [Corrective Action]
Survival of food poisoning bacteria if food is not properly reheated.	Reheat food thoroughly to kill food poisoning bacteria e.g. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 75°C or hotter.</li> </ul> <input type="checkbox"/> I do this	Use a probe thermometer for ready-to-eat foods to measure the temperature of the thickest part of the food. [Wash and disinfect the probe before and after use]. <input type="checkbox"/> I do this  [Record on BR3, Page 130]	Continue reheating the food until the thickest part reaches 75°C.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• specify cooking time/oven temperature to ensure food reaches 75°C.</li> </ul> <input type="checkbox"/> I do this  [Use equipment time/temperature combinations form on page 53]	Cross-check regularly using a probe thermometer for ready-to-eat foods to measure the temperature of the thickest part of the food. [Wash and disinfect the probe before and after use]. <input type="checkbox"/> I do this  [Record on BR3, Page 130]	Review your reheating method. You might need to increase the time or temperature or use different equipment or reduce portion sizes. [update Equipment Time/Temperature Combinations form on page 53].
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• follow manufacturers instructions.</li> </ul> <input type="checkbox"/> I do this  NOTE: It is recommended that the finished dish is reheated only once.	Cross-check regularly using a probe thermometer for ready-to-eat foods to measure the temperature of the thickest part of the food. [Wash and disinfect the probe before and after use] <input type="checkbox"/> I do this  [Record on BR3, Page 130]  Check:- <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reheated food is piping hot [steaming] all the way through.</li> </ul> <input type="checkbox"/> I do this  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Liquids bubble rapidly when stirred.</li> </ul> <input type="checkbox"/> I do this	Reheat the food for longer until the thickest part reaches 75°C.  Repair/replace equipment.  Review your reheating method.





## Hot Holding

Food in hot holding must be kept above 63°C [with certain exceptions - see below].

When you display hot food you should use suitable hot holding equipment to keep it above 63°C. It is difficult to hold food at a consistent, safe temperature without suitable equipment.



Preheat hot holding equipment before you put any food in it. Putting food into cold equipment means it might not be kept hot enough to stop food poisoning bacteria growing.

Food must be cooked/reheated thoroughly and piping hot before hot holding begins. Hot holding equipment is for hot holding only. It should not be used to cook or reheat food.



If you are concerned about the effect of hot holding on the quality of food, reduce the length of time you keep food hot - not the temperature. Food poisoning bacteria could grow in food if it is not kept hot enough.

If a dish is not hot enough at any point during hot holding, either:

- Reheat it until it is piping hot and put back into hot holding ensuring that the temperature remains over 63°C or



- Cool down the food safely to 8°C or below and reheat it later before serving.

If you cannot do either of these things, dispose of the food. Remember it is recommended that food is reheated only once.

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## Hot food displayed outside temperature control

The law permits hot food to be displayed out of temperature control for up to 2 hours.

**YOU CAN ONLY DO THIS ONCE.**

After this time, you should either reheat the food until it is piping hot and put it into hot holding above 63°C, chill it down as quickly as possible to 8°C or below, or dispose of the food. Remember to keep the food at a safe temperature until it is used.

If you do take food out of temperature control to display it, remember not to mix new food with the food that is already on display. This could lead to the older food being left out for too long.

**If you are having problems in hot holding food consider the following:**

- Check your equipment is working correctly.
- Review your method of hot holding. Try using a higher temperature setting or smaller quantities of food.

## Step: Hot Hold/Display

Examples of ready-to-eat food

What can go wrong here? [Hazards]	What can I do about it? [Control/Critical Limits]	How can I check? [Monitoring/Verification]	What if it's not right? [Corrective Action]
<p>Growth of food poisoning bacteria.</p>	<p>If hot food will be on display for more than 2 hours, keep above 63°C. <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p style="text-align: right;">I do this</p> <p>Rotate food in the hot hold cabinet – sell on 'first in first out' basis <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p style="text-align: right;">I do this</p>	<p>If food is kept on display for more than 2 hours measure the temperature every 2 hours to ensure it is 63°C or above. <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p style="text-align: right;">I do this</p> <p>[Record on BR4, Page 131]</p>	<p>If the temperature of the food has fallen below 63°C, either:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cool quickly and refrigerate for reheating or serving cold [Refer to Cooling section on pages 55].</li> <li>• Reheat to 75°C and put back into hot holding.</li> <li>• Dispose of the food.</li> <li>• Check/repair equipment.</li> </ul> <p>Note: It is recommended that food is reheated only once.</p>
<p>Contamination of hot food with food poisoning bacteria.</p>	<p>Use separate clearly distinguishable [e.g. colour coded] chopping boards, tongs, knives or other utensils for ready-to-eat foods. <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p style="text-align: right;">I do this</p> <p>OR</p> <p>Use a dishwasher to clean and disinfect chopping boards, knives, utensils, tongs, etc. if separate equipment is not available. <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p style="text-align: right;">I do this</p>	<p>Check that separate chopping boards, tongs, knives or other utensils are being used correctly and correctly located. <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p style="text-align: right;">I do this</p> <p>Check that the dishwasher is in good working order, well maintained and serviced regularly and used in accordance with manufacturer's instructions. <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p style="text-align: right;">I do this</p>	<p>More training and better supervision of staff.</p> <p>Re-wash the chopping boards, knives, utensils, etc. and service or replace the dishwasher.</p>

What can go wrong here? [Hazards]	What can I do about it? [Control/Critical Limits]	How can I check? [Monitoring/Verification]	What if it's not right? [Corrective Action]
	<p>Make sure staff wash their hands using the proper technique before handing hot food. <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>I do this</p>	<p>Observe staff hand washing to ensure that the proper technique is followed. <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>I do this</p> <p>[Record on BR5, Pages 132 on a regular basis]</p>	<p>Retrain staff in the proper hand washing technique.</p>
	<p>Make sure food is protected and or covered where appropriate e.g. sneeze guards or covers. <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>I do this</p> <p>Make sure staff use tongs/spoons to handle food. <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>I do this</p> <p>Use other method to handle food. <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>I do this</p> <p>Specify:</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p>	<p>Look at staff practices. <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>I do this</p> <p>[Record on BR5, Pages 132 on a regular basis]</p>	<p>Dispose of food if it may have been contaminated.</p> <p>More supervision/ better training/ retraining of staff.</p>

## Vacuum Packing

### Vacuum Packing Ready-to-Eat foods

Separate vacuum packers **must** be used if you vacuum pack both raw and ready-to-eat foods as there is a major risk of contamination if the same equipment is used for both purposes.



Food poisoning bacteria e.g. E coli 0157 may not be adequately removed during the cleaning and disinfection process which could result in ready-to-eat foods becoming contaminated. The vacuum packer used for ready-to-eat foods must also be located in a **clean** area where there is no risk from cross-contamination via splashes, hands, clothing, packaging or other equipment and should never be used for packing raw foods.

Vacuum packing bags could present a risk of contamination if they become contaminated during storage therefore bags used to pack ready-to-eat foods must be stored in clean areas away from likely sources of contamination from raw food. If you vacuum pack both raw and ready-to-eat foods ensure that a supply of vacuum pack bags are available at each vacuum packer.

### Reducing the risk of Clostridium botulinum in Vacuum Packed Ready-to-eat Foods

Although vacuum packing techniques generally increase the shelf-life of chilled foods by removing air, certain bacteria, including Cl botulinum, may still be able to grow.

Cl botulinum can produce a very harmful toxin that can cause a fatal form of food poisoning. It is commonly found in the environment as spores and could be in food. Removing air from food packaging can allow these spores to grow and produce toxins because Cl botulinum grows best under anaerobic [no oxygen] conditions.

Vacuum packed products must have controls in place, throughout the shelf-life of the product, to minimise the risk of this bacteria growing and producing toxin.

In order to minimise the risk from Cl botulinum;

- Store products below 3°C as Cl botulinum will not grow.
- Apply a maximum 10 day shelf-life for vacuum packed foods stored at 3-8°C
- \*If the shelf-life is more than 10 days and the food is stored between 3-8°C, the following controls should be used, either on their own or in a combination:
  - heat treatment of 90°C for 10 minutes
  - pH of 5 or less in all parts of the food
  - minimum salt level of 3.5%
  - water activity of 0.97 or less
  - combination of the controlling factors can be used at lower levels or with other preservative factors, such as nitrate

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These methods can be difficult to achieve and it is recommended that you seek expert advice from, for example, a food research association.

\* Food Standards Agency Guidance on the Safety and Shelf-life of Vacuum and Modified Atmosphere Packed Chilled Foods with Respect to Non-proteolytic *Clostridium botulinum* [July 2008].

[www.food.gov.uk/foodindustry/guidancenotes/foodguid/vacpac](http://www.food.gov.uk/foodindustry/guidancenotes/foodguid/vacpac)

### **Rewrapping Ready-to-Eat Vacuum Packed Foods**

If a vacuum packed product is unwrapped for slicing or portioning and then rewrapped:

- follow the manufacturers shelf life instructions
- if you intend to re-vacuum pack this product, careful consideration of the shelf life is necessary. This additional handling will reduce the original shelf life of the product. In order to validate the revised shelf life, microbiological testing may be necessary. There are a number of accredited laboratories that can provide these services.

## Step: Vacuum Packing

Examples of ready-to-eat food

What can go wrong here? [Hazards]	What can I do about it? [Control/Critical Limits]	How can I check? [Monitoring/Verification]	What if it's not right? [Corrective Action]
Contamination with food poisoning bacteria from raw food, surfaces, equipment and packaging	Use a separate vacuum packing machine for ready-to-eat foods. <input type="checkbox"/> I do this	Check that correct vacuum packer is used and is correctly located. <input type="checkbox"/> I do this [Record on BR5, Page 132]	Dispose of any ready-to-eat food which may have been contaminated. Improve staff training and supervision.
	Make sure packaging material for ready-to-eat food is clean and stored in the clean area. <input type="checkbox"/> I do this	Check packaging before use and ensure it is stored in the correct location. <input type="checkbox"/> I do this	Dispose of packaging and any food which may have been contaminated. Improve storage arrangements.
	Make sure vacuum pack seal is clean and intact. <input type="checkbox"/> I do this	Check that there are no air bubbles within the pack, especially with irregularly shaped products. <input type="checkbox"/> I do this  Check that seal is not contaminated with product. <input type="checkbox"/> I do this	Repack immediately. More supervision/better staff training.
Growth of food poisoning bacteria especially Clostridium botulinum in food that is vacuum packed on the premises	Store vacuum-packed food below 3°C to prevent growth of Clostridium botulinum. <input type="checkbox"/> I do this	Check temperature. <input type="checkbox"/> I do this [Record on BR2, Page 129]	If temperature rises above 3°C but less than 8°C, limit the shelf life to a maximum 10 days
	OR Store vacuum-packed food between 3°C to 8°C and restrict shelf life to a maximum of 10 days. [See Note below].* <input type="checkbox"/> I do this	Check temperature. [Record on BR2, Page 129] <input type="checkbox"/> I do this	If temperature rises above 8°C, dispose of the food.



What can go wrong here? [Hazards]	What can I do about it? [Control/Critical Limits]	How can I check? [Monitoring/Verification]	What if it's not right? [Corrective Action]
	<p>If re-vacuum packing bought in products do not exceed manufacturer's original shelf-life and follow any other manufacturer instructions. <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>I do this</p>	<p>Check date codes supplied by manufacturer. <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>I do this</p> <p>Undertake shelf-life testing to verify date code on re-vacuum packed products. <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>I do this</p>	<p>Dispose of food if original shelf-life is exceeded.</p> <p>Revise shelf-life to reflect verification</p>

\* If you wish to apply a shelf life over 10 days you should follow Food Standards Agency Guidance on the Safety and Shelf-life of Vacuum and Modified Atmosphere Packed Chilled Foods with Respect to Non-proteolytic *Clostridium botulinum* [July 2008]

## Transport and Distribution

Some butchery premises may be involved in outside catering operations or supplying their products to other retail/catering businesses. Care must be taken to prevent ready-to-eat food from being contaminated during distribution to customers.

### Contamination by food poisoning bacteria.

Ready-to-eat food from a butchery business is at risk from contamination with food poisoning bacteria from raw food if both are transported together. It is essential that both raw and ready-to-eat foods are fully wrapped and kept separate during transportation. Separate, clean, food grade containers should be used for food in transit.

Delivery drivers should exercise good personal hygiene and wash their hands regularly.

### What to do if things go wrong

If you think that ready-to-eat food has been contaminated by raw food the food should be disposed of.

### Temperature Control

- In order to prevent the growth of harmful bacteria, cold ready-to-eat food should be transported and distributed at a temperature of **8°C or below** and hot ready-to-eat food at a temperature of **63°C or above**.
- The transport vehicle or containers must be capable of maintaining the food at the appropriate temperature and allow the temperatures to be monitored.
- Temperature monitoring can be carried out either by the use of thermometers built into the vehicles or containers or alternatively by using designated calibrated thermometers. **It is important that the temperature of the food is measured and not the temperature of the holding equipment.**



### What to do if things go wrong

If during transportation the temperature of cold ready-to-eat food is found to be above 8°C or below 63°C for hot ready-to-eat food you will have to decide if the food is safe. This will depend on the temperature and the time which the food has spent above or below the appropriate temperature. Food should be disposed of if there is any doubt about its safety. Advice should be sought from your local Environmental Health Officer if necessary.



## Step: Transport and Distribution

Examples of ready-to-eat food

What can go wrong here? [Hazards]	What can I do about it? [Control/Critical Limits]	How can I check? [Monitoring/Verification]	What if it's not right? [Corrective Action]
Contamination of ready-to-eat food with food poisoning bacteria from raw food and contaminated packaging	Use separate designated compartments in delivery vehicles for raw food and ready-to-eat food. <input type="checkbox"/>  I do this	Check that raw and ready-to-eat foods are adequately separated. <input type="checkbox"/>  I do this  [Record on BR9 page 138]	Dispose of any ready-to-eat food which may have been contaminated.  Review staff practices.
	Use separate clean and clearly designated containers for ready-to-eat food. <input type="checkbox"/>  I do this  Other/additional method of separation. Please specify.  _____  _____	Check compartments and containers are clean before use. <input type="checkbox"/>  I do this	Clean compartment/containers
	Delivery personnel to exercise good personal hygiene and wash hands regularly. <input type="checkbox"/>  I do this	Check that delivery personnel exercise good personal hygiene <input type="checkbox"/>  I do this	Review staff practices. Re-train on proper hand washing procedure
Growth of food poisoning bacteria in chilled ready-to-eat food.	Transport food below 8°C by means of: -  A refrigerated vehicle <input type="checkbox"/>  I do this  A refrigerated container. <input type="checkbox"/>  I do this	Measure the air temperature by:- • placing a thermometer probe inside the unit. <input type="checkbox"/>  I do this  • looking at the temperature of the display gauge. <input type="checkbox"/>  I do this  [Cross-check periodically using designated probe thermometer]	If temperatures of food are recorded above 8°C, then:- • decide if food is safe to use. This will depend on the temperature and time the food has spent above 8°C. • Check the operation of the refrigeration equipment and adjust

What can go wrong here? [Hazards]	What can I do about it? [Control/Critical Limits]	How can I check? [Monitoring/Verification]	What if it's not right? [Corrective Action]
	<p>Other method please specify:</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p>	<p>• Check temperature of food at the point of delivery. <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>I do this</p> <p>[Record on BR9 page 138]</p>	<p>• If the temperature cannot be restored to below 8°C the food should be returned to the food premises and refrigerated. If there is any doubt about the safety of the food it should be isolated until an informed decision can be taken.</p> <p>Contact EHO for advice if necessary.</p>
<p>Growth of food poisoning bacteria in hot ready-to-eat food.</p>	<p>Ensure food is above 63°C during transport.</p> <p>Specify how temperature is maintained:</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p>	<p>Check temperature of hot food at the point of delivery:-</p> <p>Use a probe thermometer for ready-to-eat food to measure the temperature of the thickest part of the food.</p> <p>[Wash and disinfect the probe before and after use]. <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>I do this</p> <p>[Record on BR9 page 138]</p> <p>Other method please specify:</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p>	<p>If the temperature of food is below 63°C then:</p> <p>Decide if food is safe to use or if it should be disposed of. This will depend on the time the temperature has been below 63°C.</p>

---

## Physical/Chemical Contamination

It is very important to prevent objects and chemicals getting into food to prevent injury to your customers. There are many types of potential physical and chemical contaminants within your business such as hair, jewellery, cleaning chemicals, pest droppings, glass, nuts, bolts, etc. Where possible, keep food covered to stop things falling into it.



### Chemicals

Store cleaning chemicals separately from food to prevent contamination. Make sure all chemicals are clearly labelled. Follow the manufacturer's instructions carefully on how to use and store cleaning chemicals. Make sure that all cleaning chemicals you use are suitable for food contact surfaces.



### Pests

Make sure you control pests effectively [see advice on Pest Control, Section 4 page 104]. Make sure that any chemicals you use to control pests are used and stored in the correct way and are clearly labelled.

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**Never let pest control bait/chemicals, including sprays, come into direct contact with food, packaging, equipment or surfaces because they are likely to be poisonous.**

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### Personal Hygiene

Work clothes should be long sleeved and light coloured to show the dirt with no external pockets. This prevents skin from touching food, fibres and the contents of pockets getting onto food. Suitable head covering should also be worn to prevent hair from getting into food. [See advice on Personal Hygiene, Section 4 page 115].

### Structure

Maintain the structure of the premises including walls, floors, ceilings, fixtures and fittings in good condition. Keeping surfaces clear and clean will prevent chemicals and objects getting into food as well as preventing the spread of bacteria. [See advice on maintenance, Section 4 page 112].

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## Equipment/Utensils

Repair or replace any equipment or utensils that are damaged or have loose parts as these may get into food by accident.

## Glass

Limit the use of glass in the premises as this helps to reduce the risk of broken glass getting into food. Diffusers on light fittings are recommended.

## Packaging

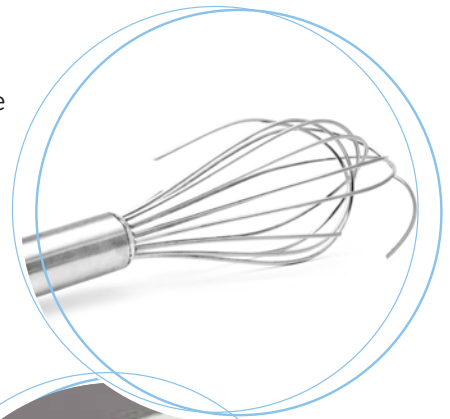
Take care to throw away packaging, plastic, etc. as soon as you remove it, to prevent contamination of food.

## Stones/Soil, etc

Ensure all deliveries are physically checked and vegetables are thoroughly washed to prevent stones/slugs etc. contaminating the food.

## What to do if things go wrong

- If you find objects in food that has been delivered, do not use it, and contact your supplier immediately.
- If chemicals or objects, such as glass or insects get into food, dispose of the food.
- If you find pests or signs of pests, take action immediately.



## Step: Physical/Chemical Contamination

These Hazards, Controls and Checks apply to all steps

What can go wrong here? [Hazards]	What can I do about it? [Control/Critical Limits]	How can I check? [Monitoring/Verification]	What if it's not right? [Corrective Action]
<p>Receipt of food contaminated with foreign objects, chemicals or pests.</p>	<p>Buy from a reputable supplier and maintain a list of your approved suppliers. <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>I do this</p> <p>[Use Suppliers list on Page 17]</p>	<p>Check deliveries have come from suppliers on approved list. Record supplier details. <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>I do this</p> <p>Check packaging of food is not damaged. <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>I do this</p>	<p>Consider using a different supplier.</p> <p>Reject food which may have been contaminated with any foreign objects/chemicals or pests.</p>
	<p>Make sure food is free from contamination by foreign objects, chemicals or pests <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>I do this</p>	<p>Look for signs of pests or other contamination/foreign bodies. <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>I do this</p>	
<p>Contamination from personnel, e.g. hair, buttons, jewellery, etc.</p>	<p>Make sure personnel wear suitable clean, protective clothing. <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>I do this</p> <p>Make sure personnel tie hair back and wear a hat and/or hair net. <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>I do this</p>	<p>Check protective clothing. <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>I do this</p> <p>[Record on BR5, Page 132]</p>	<p>More supervision/better training/re-training of staff and more supervision of other people entering food handling areas.</p> <p>Request removal of jewellery.</p>
	<p>Limit jewellery to a single plain wedding band. <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>I do this</p>	<p>Check jewellery worn by staff. <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>I do this</p> <p>[Record on BR5, Page 132]</p>	
<p>Contamination of food within premises by foreign objects, e.g. metal nuts, bolts, wood splinters plastic pieces, ceramic pieces, rust, paint.</p>	<p>Maintain structure, utensils, equipment and storage containers in a good condition. <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>I do this</p>	<p>Check structure, utensils, equipment and storage containers are in good condition. <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>I do this</p>	<p>Repair/replace structure and equipment.</p>



What can go wrong here? [Hazards]	What can I do about it? [Control/Critical Limits]	How can I check? [Monitoring/Verification]	What if it's not right? [Corrective Action]
	Keep food covered/in a container where possible. <input type="checkbox"/> I do this	Check foods are covered. <input type="checkbox"/> I do this [Record on BR5, Page 132]	Dispose of food which may have been contaminated.
Contamination of food with glass.	Limit use of glass items, particularly for storage and during preparation. <input type="checkbox"/> I do this	Check that glass items are not used where possible. Where glass items are used, make sure they are in good condition. <input type="checkbox"/> I do this	Replace glass items with those made from plastic/stainless steel or other suitable materials. Remove damaged glass items.
	Cover light fittings in areas where open food is handled. <input type="checkbox"/> I do this	Check light fittings are covered. <input type="checkbox"/> I do this	Fit light covers.  Dispose of any food which may have been contaminated.
Contamination of food by e.g. staples, plastic and other packaging materials.	Remove packaging away from open food. <input type="checkbox"/> I do this	Check staff practices. <input type="checkbox"/> I do this	Improve procedures. Better supervision/training/retraining of staff.
	Dispose of wrappings/string etc., carefully as soon as it is removed. <input type="checkbox"/> I do this	Check staff practices. <input type="checkbox"/> I do this	
Contamination of vegetables with stones, soil, slugs, etc.	Wash vegetables thoroughly by agitating under clean running water. <input type="checkbox"/> I do this	Check staff practices. <input type="checkbox"/> I do this	Rewash vegetables.
Contamination of food with pest droppings and insects.	Make sure premises are pest-proof. <input type="checkbox"/> I do this	Check premises are free from pests and pest proof. <input type="checkbox"/> I do this [Record on BR5, Page 132]  • Employ a pest control company. <input type="checkbox"/> I do this	Eliminate pests and review pest control procedures.  Dispose of food which may have been contaminated. Wash and disinfect any surfaces or equipment which pests may have been in contact with.

What can go wrong here? [Hazards]	What can I do about it? [Control/Critical Limits]	How can I check? [Monitoring/Verification]	What if it's not right? [Corrective Action]
	<p>Fit flyscreens to windows/doors where necessary. <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>I do this</p> <p>Store food in pest-proof containers. <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>I do this</p>	<p>• Pest control carried out by competent person. <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>I do this</p> <p>Check flyscreens are fitted and maintained. <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>I do this</p> <p>Check staff practices. <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>I do this</p>	<p>Repair/improve structure as necessary.</p> <p>Review contract with pest control company.</p> <p>Fit/repair flyscreens.</p> <p>More supervision/better training/re-training of staff.</p>
<p>Contamination of food with chemicals e.g. cleaning chemicals.</p>	<p>Store chemicals in designated area away from open food. <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>I do this</p> <p>Store chemicals in properly labelled containers and follow manufacturers instructions for use including dilution rates. <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>I do this</p> <p>Do not spray/use cleaning chemicals near uncovered foods. <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>I do this</p> <p>Make sure cleaning chemicals are suitable for use on food contact surfaces. <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>I do this</p>	<p>Check storage and use of chemicals. <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>I do this</p> <p>[Record on BR5, Page 132]</p>	<p>Provide suitable storage area for cleaning materials.</p> <p>Re-train staff on correct use of chemical.</p> <p>Review cleaning methods.</p> <p>Dispose of any food which may have been contaminated.</p>



## Food Allergies

### Allergens

Allergens are substances, usually protein, which cause the body's immune system to respond. In severe cases this may result in an anaphylactic shock and even death.

Symptoms can include:

- generalised flushing of the skin
- swelling of the throat and mouth
- severe asthma
- sudden feeling of weakness [fall in blood pressure]
- hives/nettle rash
- difficulty in swallowing or speaking
- abdominal pain, nausea and/or vomiting
- collapse and unconsciousness.

### Type of Food

There are a number of foods/food ingredients which can cause allergic reactions in susceptible people. These are:

Cereals containing gluten, shellfish, eggs, fish, peanuts, milk, nuts, soya, sesame seeds, celery, mustard, lupin, sulphur dioxide and sulphites.

#### Peanuts

Peanuts, also called groundnuts and monkey nuts, are found in many foods, including sauces [e.g. satay sauce]. They are common in Thai and Indonesian dishes. Watch out for peanut flour and groundnut oil too.



#### Nuts

People with nut allergy can react to many types of nut, including walnuts, almonds, hazelnuts, Brazil nuts, pistachios, cashews, pecans, macadamia nut and Queensland nut. Nuts are found in many foods, including sauces and salads. Watch out for nut oils, praline [which includes hazelnut], marzipan [which includes almond] and ground almonds too.



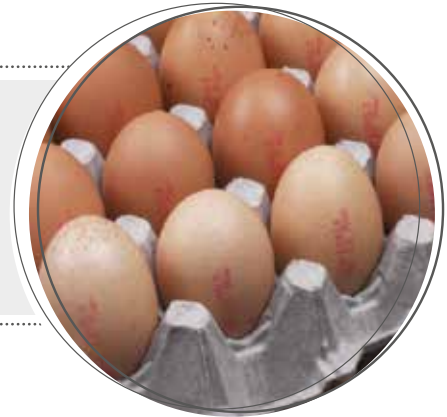
### Milk

People with milk allergy need to avoid foods containing milk, yoghurt, cream, cheese, butter and other milk products from cows, sheep, goats and other related mammals. Watch out for dishes glazed with milk and ready-made products containing milk powder, or other milk ingredients (casein, whey powder).

People with lactose intolerance need to avoid lactose, the sugar found in milk. They need to avoid food containing milk and milk products from cows and other related mammals.

### Eggs

Eggs are used in many foods including sauces, pasta and quiche. Sometimes egg is used to bind meat products, such as burgers. Watch out for dressings containing mayonnaise [which may contain egg] and dishes brushed with egg.



### Fish

People who are allergic to fish need to avoid all species of fish. Some types of fish, especially anchovies, are used in salad dressings, sauces, relishes and on pizzas. Fish sauce is commonly used in Thai dishes.

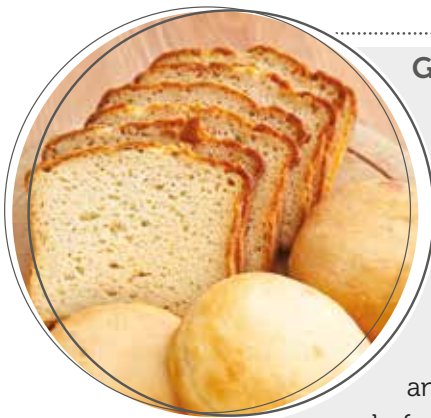
### Shellfish

People who are allergic to shellfish need to avoid all types, including scampi, prawns, mussels and crabs. Watch out for shrimp paste and oyster sauce in Chinese and Thai dishes.



### Soya

Soya comes in different forms, for example, tofu (or beancurd), soya flour, lecithin E322 (if made from soya) and textured soya protein. It is found in many foods, including meat products and vegetarian products such as 'veggie burgers'.



### Gluten

People who have gluten intolerance (also called Coeliac disease) need to avoid foods containing gluten, a type of protein found in cereals such as wheat, rye and barley, spelt and kamut (and possibly oats), and foods made from these. Wheat flour is used in many foods such as bread, pasta, cakes, pastry and meat products and in some foods that you might not expect, such as stock cubes, gravy granules and spice mixes. Watch out for soups and sauces thickened with flour, foods that are dusted with flour before cooking, batter and breadcrumbs. Flours made from other foods such as maize, rice, millet or buckwheat do not contain gluten.

### Sesame seeds

Sesame seeds are often used on bread and breadsticks. Sesame paste (tahini) is used in some Greek and Turkish dishes, including houmous. Watch out for sesame oil used for cooking or in dressings.



### Celery/celeriac

People who are allergic to celery can also react to celeriac. Celeriac and celery are sometimes used as an ingredient in salads and soups, or served as a vegetable. Watch out for celery salt, which is used as a seasoning in lots of foods, such as soups and meat products. Also look out for celery seeds, which are used as a spice.



### Mustard

People who are allergic to mustard will react to any food that comes from the mustard plant, including liquid mustard, mustard powder, the leaves seeds and flowers, and sprouted mustard seeds. Mustard is sometimes used in salad dressings, marinades, soups, sauces, spices mixes, curries and meat products.

### Lupin

The major allergens in lupin are also found in peanuts, so people who are allergic to peanuts could react to lupin. Lupin is mainly used in flour-based products such as pastry and pasta. People with peanut allergy should avoid foods containing lupin.



### Sulphur Dioxide

For some people with asthma, sulphur dioxide can trigger an asthmatic response. Sulphur dioxide and sulphites [E220-E228] are used as preservatives in a wide range of foods, particularly meat products such as sausages, soft drinks, and dried fruit and vegetables. Sulphur dioxide is also found in wine and beer.

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## Controlling Allergens in your Business

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**It is important to know what to do if you serve a customer who has a food allergy, because these allergies can kill. If someone has a severe allergy, they can react to even a tiny amount of the food they are sensitive to.**

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### Staff knowledge and customer information

It is important that staff have been trained on the types of foods listed above which can cause allergies. Customers should be informed to alert staff if they have any allergies to foods.

Give detailed information in the name or description of the product on a notice or ticket displayed next to the product or on a label attached to the product, especially if the product includes the foods listed above. Remember to update notices, tickets and labels when recipes change. This allows people with food allergies to identify products containing allergens.

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**Staff should know how to deal with enquiries about ingredients and possible contamination. If someone asks if a product contains a certain food, check all the ingredients in the product [and what they contain], as well as what you use to cook the product, thicken a sauce and to make a salad dressing. Always read the labels - never guess. If you can't be sure that the product doesn't contain the food in question, tell the customer and let them make their own mind up as to whether to purchase the food.**

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### Checking Ingredients

It is important to check food labels and supplier information for the presence of allergens in ingredients used to prepare products. Keep a copy of the ingredient information or product specification on any ready-made foods that you use so that you can check what is in them. Make sure staff know where to access this information and that it is kept up to date.

### How to prepare/serve allergen free food

When you have been asked to prepare a product that doesn't contain a certain food, such as gluten free sausages, make sure work surfaces and equipment have been thoroughly cleaned first. Ensure staff wash their hands thoroughly before preparing the food. This is to prevent small amounts of the food that a person is allergic to getting into the product accidentally.

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## What to do if things go wrong

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### **If you think a customer is having a severe allergic reaction:**

- **Do not move them because this could make them worse.**
  - **Ring 999 for an ambulance immediately and describe what is happening.**
  - **Explain that your customer could have anaphylaxis [pronounced 'anna-fill-axis'].**
  - **Send someone outside to wait for the ambulance and stay with your customer until help arrives.**
- 

### **How to stop this happening again**

- If you or your staff are not sure if there is a trace of life threatening ingredient in a product, then say so - never guess.
- Make sure that all your staff understand how important it is to check all the contents of a product if they are asked by someone who has a food allergy.
- Make sure you are keeping ingredient information for all products and that staff know to check this.
- Make sure that when staff prepare a product for someone with a food allergy e.g. gluten free sausages, that they are cleaning effectively first and using clean equipment.
- Improve the descriptions on your tickets/notices and labels.
- Train all staff, whether they are going to work in the preparation area or serve customers, about food allergies so they know to take it seriously and know how to deal with customer queries.
- Alert customers to inform staff if they have allergies to any foods.
- Improve supervision.

For further information on food allergies visit

[www.food.gov.uk/safereating/allergyintol/](http://www.food.gov.uk/safereating/allergyintol/)

[www.food.gov.uk/aboutus/publications/labpublications](http://www.food.gov.uk/aboutus/publications/labpublications)

[www.fsai.ie](http://www.fsai.ie)

[www.anaphylaxis.org.uk/](http://www.anaphylaxis.org.uk/)

Online allergy training is available on the FSA website

[www.food.gov.uk/enforcement/enforcetrainfund/onlinetraining/allergytraining](http://www.food.gov.uk/enforcement/enforcetrainfund/onlinetraining/allergytraining)

Advice on making gluten free claims is available on the FSA website

[www.food.gov.uk/safereating/allergyintol/label/gluten/](http://www.food.gov.uk/safereating/allergyintol/label/gluten/)

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## Food Allergies

<b>What can go wrong here?</b> [Hazards]	<b>What can I do about it?</b> [Control/Critical Limits]	<b>How can I check?</b> [Monitoring/Verification]	<b>What if it's not right?</b> [Corrective Action]
Accidental consumption of food containing allergens by customers with food allergies.	Follow advice on Food Allergies, Page 83. <input type="checkbox"/> I do this  Train staff. <input type="checkbox"/> I do this [Record on BR6, Page 134]	Check staff awareness and practices. <input type="checkbox"/> I do this [Record on BR5, Page 132]	Improve staff awareness/more supervision/better training/re-training of staff.



**Additional Step:** \_\_\_\_\_

Use this sheet for any steps which are additional to those outlined in this section

Examples of food

<b>What can go wrong here?</b> [Hazards]	<b>What can I do about it?</b> [Control/Critical Limits]	<b>How can I check?</b> [Monitoring/Verification]	<b>What if it's not right?</b> [Corrective Action]

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**Additional Step:** .....

Use this sheet for any steps which are additional to those outlined in this section

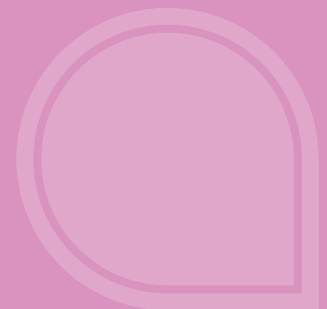
Examples of food

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<b>What can go wrong here?</b> [Hazards]	<b>What can I do about it?</b> [Control/Critical Limits]	<b>How can I check?</b> [Monitoring/Verification]	<b>What if it's not right?</b> [Corrective Action]

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# Hygiene Requirements



This section covers other hygiene requirements which must be addressed by every food business.

Indicate by ticking the boxes below that you have read and continuously implement each requirement as appropriate to your food business and instruct/train your staff accordingly.

**Cleaning**

[Pages 93-103]

1 do this

**Pest Control**

[Pages 104-108]

1 do this

**Waste Control**

[Pages 109-111]

1 do this

**Maintenance**

[Pages 112-114]

1 do this

**Personal Hygiene**

[Pages 115-119]

1 do this

**Training/Supervision**

[Pages 120-122]

1 do this

**Advice on using a probe thermometer**

[Page 123-125]

1 do this

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## CLEANING

### Why is cleaning and disinfection important?

Cleaning and disinfection of food premises is important for a number of reasons:

- To prevent food poisoning - proper cleaning and disinfection will reduce food poisoning bacteria to a safe level and will help to reduce the risk of cross-contamination.
- To remove undesirable physical materials which may contaminate food.

### What needs to be cleaned and disinfected?

All equipment and areas within food premises are required to be kept clean. The following also require to be thoroughly disinfected:

- **Equipment and surfaces which come into contact with food**, for example, work surfaces, chopping boards, shelving, crockery, utensils, food storage containers, pots and cutlery.
- **Non-food contact surfaces**, for example, worktops and walls, which may be subject to splashes,
- **Non-food contact equipment**, for example, sinks, wash hand basins, taps, and items that people touch frequently such as fridge/freezer door handles, switches, cash registers, etc., which may present a cross-contamination risk if shared by staff handling raw and ready-to-eat foods.

### How to clean and disinfect.

Before you start to clean it is a good idea to move food out of the way or cover it to prevent dirt, bacteria or cleaning chemicals from getting on to the food.

Proper cleaning requires 2 stages;

#### Stage 1: General cleaning using a detergent

The first stage is a general clean of the surface or equipment using a suitable detergent to remove visible dirt, food particles, grease and debris. This stage should always be completed by rinsing to ensure thorough removal of all residues from the surface prior to stage 2.





## Stage 2: Disinfection

The second stage is the disinfection stage to ensure that any bacteria present are reduced to an acceptable level. It is important to remember that disinfection is only effective when carried out on clean surfaces. Disinfection can be achieved by non-chemical or chemical disinfection methods.

### Non-chemical disinfection

#### Heat

Dishwashers wash items thoroughly at a high temperature so is one of the most reliable ways to clean equipment and kill bacteria such as E coli 0157.

The dishwasher must be maintained in good working order, serviced regularly and used in accordance with manufacturer's instructions. The manufacturer's cleaning and maintenance instructions must be followed and instructions typically include the removal of food debris, plastic wrapping and limescale from the water jets, filters and drains, as well as carrying out regular cleaning.

Steam cleaning and use of sterilising sinks can also be effective methods for disinfecting but care should be taken due to the high temperatures reached.



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## Chemical Disinfection

There are several different chemicals that can be used for general cleaning and disinfection. It is very important to understand the differences between each of these to make sure they are used properly. The following summarizes the purpose of each:



### Detergent/Degreaser

A chemical [e.g. washing-up liquid] used to remove grease, dirt and food. A detergent will not reduce the level of harmful bacteria such as E coli 0157 to an acceptable level and should only be used for general cleaning.

### Disinfectant

A chemical that kills harmful bacteria or reduces them to an acceptable level when applied to a visibly clean surface at a specified dilution and contact time. [Check that surfaces are **free** from grease, dirt and food before you use a disinfectant].

### Sanitiser

A two-in-one product that acts as a detergent and a disinfectant. This means that the same product can be used to provide a visibly clean surface **but it must be used a second time in order to disinfect the surface.**

## Important things to consider when using cleaning chemicals

### Dilution rate

Most cleaning chemicals are concentrated, so you need to add water to dilute them before they can be used. It is important to follow the manufacturer's instructions on how much water to use with the chemical. This is the '**dilution rate**'. If you add too much water then the cleaning chemical might not work effectively. Too little water may result in chemical contamination.

### Contact time

This is how long a cleaning chemical needs to be left on the item you are cleaning. **It is important to follow the manufacturer's instructions on contact time for the chemical to work effectively.**

### Final Rinse

Disinfection should be followed by a final rinse of the surface or equipment with clean water to remove any remaining chemical, unless it is formulated for use without a final rinse.

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**When disinfection has taken place, extra care must be taken to make sure that the equipment/surfaces, etc. are not re-contaminated by raw foods.**

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### Standards for disinfectants and sanitisers

There are two recognised standards which indicate that a disinfectant or sanitiser is effective at killing food poisoning bacteria such as E coli 0157, these are:

- BS EN 1276:1997 [now replaced by BS EN 1276:2009]
- BS EN 13697:2001

You should check that your disinfectant/sanitising products meet these standards by checking the label of the product or confirming this with your supplier.

It is recommended that every business should maintain an up to date list of chemicals that they use, what they are used for, dilution rates and contact times. This may be part of the cleaning schedule or may be kept separately,

### Additional disinfection considerations

Where a dishwasher is not available to disinfect equipment and utensils, separate identifiable equipment and utensils must be designated for use with ready-to-eat foods only and should never be used for raw foods.

Equipment and utensils used with ready-to-eat foods and those used with raw foods, whilst always kept separate, will nonetheless need to be washed and disinfected. If there is no dishwasher to do this, the washing process will have to be carefully managed. The utensils and equipment used with ready-to-eat foods should be washed and disinfected in the sink and then removed to the designated clean area to avoid re-contamination. The utensils and equipment used with raw foods may then be thoroughly washed and disinfected. The sink and fittings must be thoroughly cleaned and disinfected between uses.

It is important to remember that complex equipment should NEVER be used for both raw and ready-to-eat foods.

### Cleaning Materials

Separate cleaning materials such as cloths, wipes and sponges should be provided for use in clean ready-to-eat areas only. Those provided for use in the clean area should be stored within the clean area and must only be used in this area.

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## Cloths

**Cloths can be one of the main causes of cross-contamination. It is essential to use them safely to prevent bacteria such as E coli 0157 from spreading.**



When cleaning, follow these steps to use cloths safely:

- Use disposable, single use cloths wherever possible and throw them away after each task.
- Provide separate cloths designated for use in either the raw or clean area. It is a good idea to make these colour coded to make them easy to identify.
- Reusable cloths should be disinfected using a boil wash [typically 90°C].
- Where laundry is done by an external company, check to make sure that lower wash temperatures are not used for energy efficiency.
- Using dirty cloths can spread bacteria very easily. It is recommended that you have a designated place for dirty re-usable cloths to prevent them being reused before they have been washed.

## Training and instruction

It is essential that staff carrying out cleaning and disinfection activities follow effective cleaning and disinfection procedures. Staff should be trained in effective methods of cleaning, proper use of cleaning chemicals and the action to take if a lapse in cleaning has taken place. Where necessary ensure that correct measuring containers are provided for making up dilutions of chemicals in accordance with manufacturer's instructions for proper use.

**Chemicals must be purchased from reputable suppliers and used in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions.**

If you have manufacturer's cleaning instructions for a piece of equipment, follow these. The instructions will tell you how to clean this particular piece of equipment thoroughly.

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## Cleaning Schedules

If cleaning and disinfection is to be effective then it needs to be planned. A cleaning schedule is a useful tool to help you clean and disinfect effectively in your business. You can use the cleaning schedule and record sheets supplied in this pack to write down how you clean and disinfect in your business, and to make a record that cleaning and disinfection has taken place. It is important to write down how you do your cleaning and disinfection, so staff know how to do it properly.

Although cleaning schedules are useful tools to ensure routine and in depth cleaning and disinfection takes place, it is also important to clean and disinfect as you go.



## How to use the cleaning schedule in this pack

The cleaning schedule is to be used to keep a record of all the equipment, fixtures and fittings that need to be cleaned and disinfected in your premises and to record how they should be cleaned and disinfected. This schedule is completed once, but reviewed periodically to ensure that it is still up to date. Once the schedule is completed staff should receive training on the implementation of the schedule and evidence of this training should be recorded. It is suggested that the cleaning schedule is posted in a conspicuous place so that all your staff can easily see what needs cleaned and disinfected and how often. It may also be used to record that cleaning and disinfection has been carried out.

### Completing the cleaning schedule

1. In order to complete the cleaning schedule it is recommended that you walk through your premises and make a list of items that need cleaned and disinfected. This will depend on what you do in your business. You may find it helpful to go through the following examples.

<b>Items that come into contact with food:</b>
• Equipment and utensils e.g. knives, chopping boards
• Fridges and freezers
• Equipment with moving parts e.g. slicers
<b>Non-food contact surfaces which may be subject to splashes:</b>
• Worktops
• Walls
• Ovens, microwaves
<b>Non-food contact equipment which may present a cross-contamination risk if shared by staff handling raw and ready-to-eat foods:</b>
• Cash registers
• Door and equipment handles, taps, switches and controls
• Can openers, telephones
• Rubbish bins, broom and mop handles
<b>Other cleaning</b>
• Floors, walls, ceilings
• Storage areas and freezers
• Waste areas and drains
• Staff areas

2. List all surfaces and equipment that must be cleaned and disinfected to ensure the effective removal of bacteria e.g. E coli in the items column of the schedule. You will then need to detail against each item [or group of items] how they must be cleaned and disinfected. This will include:
  - How often you clean and disinfect the item[s]
  - Any precautions that your staff should take when cleaning e.g. should they wear gloves or goggles
  - How you clean and disinfect the item[s] and what equipment you use
  - What chemicals you use and how to use them
  - The person[s] responsible for cleaning and disinfecting.
3. Review your schedule regularly and check that all cleaning and disinfection is done properly. Train staff on the cleaning schedule, so they know what they have to do, and when.
4. Supervise cleaning and sign of cleaning schedule to confirm that cleaning has been completed.

It is recommended that the cleaning schedule is posted in a prominent position in your premises, in a position that all staff can view.

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### Example Of A Cleaning Schedule:

Item	Frequency of cleaning				Method of cleaning	Chemical[s] used [include dilution required]	Contact time recommended by the manufacturer	Person Responsible
	After Use	Daily	Weekly	Other				
Weighing Scales					<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Remove any obvious food and dirt.</li> <li>2. Wash the surface with hot soapy water [detergent diluted according to manufacturer's instructions] to remove grease and any other food and dirt.</li> <li>3. Rinse with clean water to remove the detergent and loosened food and dirt.</li> <li>4. Apply a disinfectant. Make sure you leave it on for the contact time recommended by the manufacturer.</li> <li>5. Rinse with clean water to remove the disinfectant.</li> <li>6. Leave to dry naturally or use a clean disposable cloth.</li> </ol>	<p>X Brand detergent diluted 4:1</p> <p>Y Brand disinfectant diluted 4:1</p>	<p>N/A</p> <p>5 minutes</p>	<b>Butcher</b>
Slicing Machine					<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Turn off power supply.</li> <li>2. Disconnect lead.</li> <li>3. Scrape off food and rinse.</li> <li>4. Take apart and wash thoroughly in hot water and detergent.</li> <li>5. Apply a disinfectant. Make sure you leave it on for the contact time recommended by the manufacturer.</li> <li>6. Leave to dry or use a clean disposable cloth.</li> </ol>	<p>X Brand detergent diluted 4:1</p> <p>Y Brand disinfectant diluted 4:1</p>	<p>N/A</p> <p>5 minutes</p>	<b>Deli Operative</b>







## PEST CONTROL

### Why Pest control is important?

Pest control is important because pests can carry food poisoning bacteria that can contaminate foods and cause illness or food spoilage. These food poisoning bacteria can be passed to the food by contact with their hair, faeces and urine. Pests can also cost thousands of pounds worth of damage to food businesses and their reputations.

### Common Pests

Generally speaking pests are animals, birds or insects that contaminate food, either directly or indirectly.

They include:

- **Rodents, for e.g. rats and mice**

**Signs:**

Small footprints in dust, droppings, holes in walls and doors, nests, gnawed goods or packaging, grease or smear marks, urine stains on food packaging.



- **Flies and flying insects**

**Signs:**

Bodies of insects, live insects, webbing, nests, droning or buzzing, maggots.

- **Cockroaches**

**Signs:**

Eggs and egg cases, moulted 'skins', the insects themselves, droppings.





• **Ants**

**Signs:**

Small piles of sand or soil, the insects themselves, flying ants on hot days.



• **Birds**

**Signs:**

Feathers, droppings, nests, noise, the birds themselves.



• **Beetles and weevils**

**Signs:**

Moving insects, particularly in dry food, small maggots.

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## Hazards associated with pests

Contamination of food by:

- Bacteria from pests and their droppings
- Pests' bodies, eggs, hairs, droppings, etc.
- Chemicals e.g. careless use of pest control bait

### Control Measures

#### 1. Pest proofing of the premises

The building must be in good condition and repair in order to restrict pest access and prevent potential breeding sites. This can be done by:

- Using wire mesh screens to pest proof air vents.
- Sealing holes, and other places where pests can gain access.
- Keeping the floors, walls, roof, doors and window openings in a good state of repair with no gaps or spaces to prevent the entry of pests.
- Fitting drain covers to prevent pests gaining access.

#### 2. Insects Screens

- It is recommended that windows opening directly into food preparation areas should be fitted with screens capable of resisting flying insects [ideally apertures should be of 2mm<sup>2</sup> or less].
- Screens must be removable to allow for cleaning.
- It is recommended that doors which open to the outside air and which are opened for lengthy periods should be suitably screened using a close-fitting insect-proof screen door.

#### 3. Electronic Fly-Killing Devices

- Flying insects can be destroyed using an electronic fly-killing device. Manufacturers will give advice on the location, cleaning and maintenance of this equipment. Ensure that they are not positioned over areas where food is handled.
- Change bulbs annually or as specified by the manufacturer.



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#### 4. Good Housekeeping

- Check deliveries thoroughly. Inspect stock on delivery to make sure that there are no visible signs of damage by pests. Do not accept a delivery if it shows signs of pests such as gnawed packaging or insects, e.g. beetles.
- Premises and refuse stores must be managed in such a way as to enable them to be kept clean, and protected against access by pests.
- Foods which are awaiting preparation, are being defrosted or are cooling should be kept suitably covered.
- Food waste should be removed regularly from areas where it is produced or placed in containers with lids.
- Food should be stored off the floor and away from walls.
- Food should, where possible, be stored in sealed containers.
- Keep external areas tidy and free from weeds. Make sure bins have close fitting lids and are easy to clean.

#### 5. Checking and Inspection

- **All areas of the food premises should be checked regularly for signs of pests such as rodent droppings, smear marks, insect egg cases and dead insects**
  - Staff should be made aware of the signs of pests and what action they must take should they discover pests or signs of pests.
  - Management must take immediate and appropriate action to control any infestation of pests identified on their premises.
  - Foods should be checked for the presence of pests, for example, insects within cereals/grains.
  - Record pest control measures undertaken on the premises.
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## 6. Pest Control Contractor

- Some businesses may decide to employ a Pest Control Company to monitor the premises on a regular basis.
- A pest control contract should include checking for the presence of all pests, monitor the pest proofing of the premises and the eradication of any infestations found.
- A reputable pest control company should provide advice on housekeeping and storage arrangements to prevent access by pests.
- The contractor should be able to provide a 24 hour emergency cover and should provide a written report after each visit. It is recommended that any pest contractor report is kept as part of your documentation.
- Ensure that any recommendations of the Pest Contractor are acted on immediately and that the report is signed to confirm that the recommendations have been completed.

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### Steps to be taken if you discover a pest control problem in your premises

- Find out the cause of the infestation and take steps to eliminate the pests.
  - If you think food has been contaminated by pests dispose of it.
  - If you think any equipment, surfaces or utensils have been contaminated by pests, they should be cleaned and disinfected to stop food poisoning bacteria from spreading.
  - Repair any structural defects immediately.
  - Contact your local Environmental Health Officer if you require further advice.
  - Improve staff training on recognising signs of pests and encourage them to report problems immediately.
  - Make your pest checks more frequent.
  - **If you have persistent problems with pests, consider using the regular services of a Pest Control Company, if you do not have one already.**
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## Waste Control

### Why is waste control important?

Waste can be regarded as any item of food, ingredients, packaging materials or even soiled cleaning cloths which are not suitable for further use and which are intended to be discarded.

**Waste presents a risk of physical contamination to food and may attract pests. Additionally, food that is damaged, out of date or rotting may present a risk of cross-contamination to other foods from food poisoning bacteria.**

### How can waste be controlled?

#### Waste in Food Rooms

- Food waste and other waste must be removed frequently from the food handling areas.
- Sufficient containers should be provided and placed conveniently where the waste occurs.
- Pedal operated bins are recommended to avoid touching lids.



#### Waste awaiting collection

- Lids on containers used for the storage of waste awaiting collection should be kept closed and should be easy to clean and disinfect.
  - Waste stores must be designed and managed in such a way as to enable them to be kept clean, and protected against pests [refer to the **Pest Control guidance, page 104**]. Waste stores should, ideally, be located away from food storage and handling areas and from the main delivery entrance as they may encourage flies.
  - Other waste such as cardboard and paper need not be placed in a sealed container but must be kept separate from food and must be stored in such a way that it does not pose a risk of contamination.
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## Waste Disposal

It is your responsibility to ensure that all waste including Animal By-Products is disposed of properly in accordance with relevant legislation.

## Animal By-Products

The disposal to landfill of bones, raw meat including trimmings, raw fish and raw poultry [both fresh and frozen] and certain other former foodstuffs containing products of animal origin, which are no longer intended for human consumption is banned.

However small quantities of animal by-products [not exceeding 20kg per week] may be disposed of by landfill with other general waste. Records of the type and quantity of material being sent to landfill must be kept for inspection.

## Separation, Storage and Collection

If more than 20kg per week of animal by-products is produced it must not go to landfill and you will need to keep these waste lines separate from other general waste at your premises. In practice you will have to store this waste in a separate, covered, leak proof container labelled '**Category 3 - Not for Human Consumption**'.



## Examples of Category 3 materials [fresh and frozen]

- Raw meat and raw fish that needs to be cooked before it is eaten
- Raw sausages, burgers, bacon and gammon
- Raw meat, poultry, fish and seafood in packs or loose
- Raw meat, poultry, fish or seafood items in coatings or sauces
- Raw eggs

## Examples of Category 3 former foodstuffs [fresh and frozen]

These are foodstuffs no longer intended for human consumption which have not undergone a heat treatment resulting in a physical change-

- Partially cooked meat [eg. rare roast beef, raw/pink meat]
- Smoked, dried or cured meat
- Bresaola [Dried Beef]
- Beef jerky
- Salami, parma & serrano ham

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Category 3 waste must be collected and disposed of as soon as reasonably practicable to minimise the risk of smell and decomposition of the material. The collection service must be approved by Department of Agriculture and Rural Development [DARD]. The business owner and the collection service must retain a copy of the commercial document which accompanies the raw material to its final destination. Records of all animal by-products which are collected and transported must be made and retained for at least 2 years. Environmental Health Officers will check these documents when they visit your premises.

An up to date list of DARD approved collection services can be viewed on the following website:  
[www.dardni.gov.uk](http://www.dardni.gov.uk)

Guidance on The Animal By-Products [Enforcement] Regulations [NI] 2011 is available on the following website: [www.dardni.gov.uk/index/animal-health/animal-by-products/animal-by-products-guidance-documents.htm](http://www.dardni.gov.uk/index/animal-health/animal-by-products/animal-by-products-guidance-documents.htm)

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## Maintenance

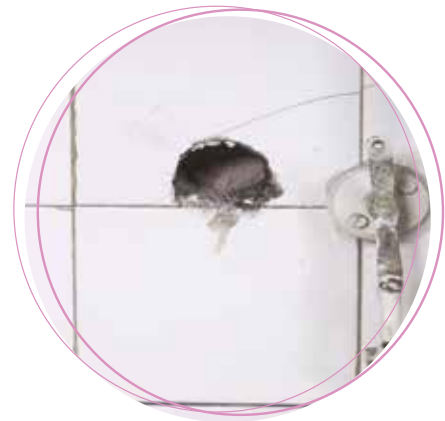
### Why is maintenance important?

Effective maintenance is essential to allow you to clean properly and keep pests out. A lack of maintenance can also result in defective and poorly maintained equipment resulting in physical contamination of food. Poorly maintained equipment such as chilling equipment and cooking equipment could result in inadequate temperature control causing unsafe food to be produced. Check your premises regularly for any structural damage or problems with equipment.

### What needs to be maintained?

#### Premises Structure

- All internal surfaces must be smooth, impervious, easy to clean and in a good state of repair. Maintaining the structure in good repair makes it easier to effectively clean the premises.
- Repair structural damage as soon as it happens e.g. damp/chipped plaster, broken tiles, holes in walls or windows.
- Ensure all surface coatings i.e. paint are of low toxicity, cleansable and adhere firmly so that flaking is minimised.
- To prevent the entry of pests, the floors, walls, roofs, doors and window openings must be kept in a good state of repair with no gaps or spaces.
- Drainpipes should be kept free of leaks and blockages.



#### Equipment

- All food contact surfaces and equipment must be maintained in good condition to enable effective cleaning and disinfection, and to prevent the build up of debris. Repair or replace any equipment or utensils that are damaged or have loose parts. If carrying out repairs ensure that you use appropriate 'foodsafes' materials. Dirt and food poisoning bacteria can collect in damaged equipment/utensils. Loose parts may fall into food.



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- Dispose of any cracked or chipped food containers. Dirt and food poisoning bacteria can collect in cracks or chips.
  - Replace chopping boards that are scratched, pitted or scored. Dirt and food poisoning bacteria can collect in any areas where the board is not smooth.
  - Broken or defective light bulbs, tubes and fittings should be replaced promptly.
  - Certain equipment may require to be serviced at regular intervals, for example, cooking equipment, hot holding equipment, refrigerators and freezers, dishwashers and ventilation systems/ducting.
  - Check extractor fans and filters regularly to make sure they are working properly and are free from grease and dirt. This is to make sure the fans and filters can do their job properly.
  - Regularly check door seals on refrigeration and cooking equipment.



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## Water Supply

You must ensure that there is an adequate supply of clean water. If you encounter problems with your mains supply contact Northern Ireland Water.

If your water supply is from a private source e.g. a spring, well or borehole, you must ensure that it is registered with the Drinking Water Inspectorate and maintained and tested in accordance with drinking water legislation. If you want any advice about your private water supply contact your local Environmental Health Department.



### What to do if things go wrong

- If you think that equipment might not be working properly, check it straight away. Do not wait until it has broken down. Check that staff are using the equipment properly.
- Look at the manufacturer's instructions to see if there is a troubleshooting section.
- Contact the equipment manufacturer or your maintenance contractor, if you have one.
- Use alternative equipment until the fault has been corrected.
- Put problems right as soon as possible, before they get worse or affect food safety.

### How to stop this happening again

- Make your maintenance checks more frequent.
  - Encourage staff to report any structural damage or problems with equipment, so you know about problems early.
  - Improve staff supervision and training.
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## Personal Hygiene

### Why personal hygiene is important

It is vital for staff to follow good personal hygiene practices to help prevent bacteria spreading to food. The law requires that every person working in a food handling area maintains a high degree of personal cleanliness and wears suitable clean and where necessary protective clothing.

#### General advice

- Staff must always wash their hands before preparing food as it is one of the best ways to prevent food poisoning bacteria from spreading.
- All staff must wear clean clothes when working with food. Ideally, they should change into clean work clothes before starting work and not wear these clothes outside food preparation areas.
- Ideally, work clothes/uniforms should be light-coloured [to show the dirt] with no external pockets. This helps to stop hairs, fibres and the contents of pockets getting into food.
- It is good practice for staff to wear clean or disposable aprons over their work clothes, especially when working with raw food. Aprons help to stop dirt and bacteria getting onto work clothes and they can be removed easily for washing, or thrown away if disposable.
- **Any contaminated protective clothing worn in a raw food preparation environment [e.g. aprons and overalls] should be changed before handling ready-to-eat food or entering a clean area.**
- It is good practice for staff to keep hair tied back and wear a hat or hairnet when preparing food. If hair is not tied back or covered, it is more likely to fall into food and staff are more likely to touch their hair.
- Food poisoning bacteria can be spread from someone's face or mouth to their hands and then onto food. Staff should not smoke, drink, eat or chew gum while handling food. Staff should also avoid touching their face or nose, or coughing and sneezing.
- Watches and jewellery can collect and spread dirt and food poisoning bacteria, or fall into the food. Staff should not wear watches or jewellery when preparing food [except a plain wedding band].
- It is good practice to have a separate area where staff can change and store their outdoor clothes. Clothes could be a source of bacteria if they are left lying around.



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- It is good practice to keep a clean set of work clothes or disposable aprons for visitors e.g. maintenance personnel. Remember anyone entering the food preparation area can bring in bacteria on their clothes.

### Hand washing

- Food poisoning bacteria can spread very easily from people's hands to food, work surfaces, equipment, etc. Effective hand washing helps to prevent this.
  - All staff who handle food must be **trained in effective hand washing techniques**.
  - Effective hand washing is always required prior to handling ready-to-eat foods and must also occur:-
    - When entering a food room e.g. after a break or going to the toilet
    - After handling any food that may be contaminated with bacteria i.e. raw meat/poultry/fish, eggs and unprepared fruit/vegetables
    - After hand contact with shared cash register, door handles, light switches, aprons or other surfaces that could come into contact with staff handling raw foods
    - After eating
    - After cleaning
    - After emptying bins
    - After touching a cut or changing a dressing
  - Make sure that wash hand basins are convenient, have adequate supplies of hot and cold water or warm water at a suitably controlled temperature, soap and disposable towels. The use of non-hand-operable taps is recommended, but if they are not available, taps should be turned off using a paper towel.  
For extra protection a liquid hand wash that has disinfectant properties conforming to BS EN 1499:1997 is recommended.
  - If you think a member of staff has not washed their hands when they should, make sure they wash them straight away and if there is a possibility that ready-to-eat food has become contaminated, dispose of it. Emphasise how important it is to wash their hands when working with food. Increase staff supervision until you are satisfied that the staff member's hand washing practices are satisfactory.
  - Anti-bacterial hand gels should not be used instead of thorough hand washing. When used to provide an additional level of protection the product should conform to standard BS EN 1500. This information should be available on the label of the product or can be obtained from the supplier or manufacturer.
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## Washing hands effectively

**Step 1:**

Wet your hands thoroughly under warm running water and squirt liquid soap onto your palm.

**Step 2:**

Rub your hands together palm to palm to make a lather.

**Step 3:**

Rub the palm of one hand along the back of the other and along the fingers. Repeat with the other hand.

**Step 4:**

Put your palms together with fingers interlocked and rub in between each of the fingers thoroughly.

**Step 5:**

Rub round your thumbs on each hand and then rub the fingertips of each hand against your palms.

**Step 6:**

Rinse off the soap with clean water and dry your hands thoroughly on a disposable towel.

Turn off the tap with the towel and then throw the towel away.

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## Disposable gloves

Disposable gloves when used correctly can be effective in helping to prevent the transfer of food poisoning bacteria onto food. However care should be taken when using gloves as they can become contaminated in the same way as hands.

The following needs to be taken into account when wearing gloves to prevent cross-contamination:

- Hands must be washed thoroughly before and after use.
- Use separate packs of disposable gloves for different activities.
- Contaminated gloves must never enter a clean area used for handling or storing ready-to-eat food.
- Gloves must be used only once. Change gloves between tasks e.g. after touching raw food or money, before touching ready-to-eat foods, after emptying bins, after cleaning etc.
- Dispose of used gloves after each task.

## Fitness to Work

### What is Fitness to Work?

Staff should be 'fit for work' at all times. This means that they must not be suffering from, or carrying, an illness or disease that could cause a problem with food safety. People who are not 'fit for work' could spread food poisoning bacteria to food.

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**Any member of staff who has diarrhoea and/or vomiting must by law report it to their manager immediately. They may be asked to stay at home or go home straight away and consult their doctor. They may be given a different job which does not involve direct contact with food or working in areas where food is stored or handled. Staff should also tell their manager if they have any cuts or sores. People suffering from these symptoms often carry food poisoning bacteria on their hands and can spread them to food or equipment they touch.**

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The law puts the responsibility on employers to satisfy themselves that no food handlers pose a risk to food safety.

Staff who have had diarrhoea and/or vomiting should not return to work until they have had no symptoms for **48 hours**. Even if the diarrhoea and vomiting has stopped, someone can still carry food poisoning bacteria for 48 hours afterwards.

Cuts and sores should be completely covered with a waterproof dressing e.g. blue. This is to prevent bacteria from the cut or sore spreading to food.

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The fitness of the food handler to work should be checked before they are employed or before they return to work after illness. It is recommended that an assessment is carried out for all existing employees. This can be done using form BR7 on page 135. This form may also be useful to establish the health status of visitors, staff returning from abroad and new workers from abroad.

Further guidance on this subject is contained in the booklet **“Food Handlers - Fitness to Work – Regulatory Guidance and Best Practice Advice for Food Business Operators”**, available from the Food Standards Agency Northern Ireland, Website <http://www.food.gov.uk/northernireland/> or contact your local Environmental Health Officer.

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## Training/Supervision

**You must make sure that staff are adequately supervised and instructed and/or trained in food hygiene to allow them to do their job safely.** Those responsible for the food safety management procedures [e.g. this pack] should also be trained in their application. This pack is designed not only to help you to draw up your own food safety management procedures but it could also be used by you to instruct and train your staff.

**The following structure is recommended:**

- All food handlers should receive instruction on basic hygiene rules **before** starting work. See page 122.
  - You should instruct and train food handlers in each section of this pack that is relevant to the job they do in order to ensure that the relevant practices and procedures are followed. **Particular attention must be paid to the hand washing technique and cleaning methods.**
  - Trained staff must be monitored regularly and supervised shortly after training to ensure that they are following relevant sections of the pack.
  - Managers and supervisors responsible for developing and maintaining the HACCP based food safety management procedures [this pack] must have adequate training in the application of HACCP principles.
  - Staff involved in the handling of high risk foods will require further instruction and training as soon as is practical and **within 3 months** of commencing work. The topics covered must, as a minimum, include the critical controls relevant to their work activity and may include some or all of the following:
    - Basic food safety including causes and prevention of food poisoning.
    - Food storage and importance of temperature control.
    - Safe food preparation and handling practices including specific procedures required to control cross-contamination from bacteria e.g. E coli and other pathogens and if applicable any alternative controls which you implement to reduce cross-contamination risks in areas where complete separation is not physically possible.
    - Personal hygiene and effective hand washing technique.
    - Effective cleaning and disinfection techniques including chemical dilution rates and contact time, use of equipment and handling of waste.
    - Pest control - preventive measures.
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In order to help achieve this, some businesses may wish to send their staff to formal Level 2 training in Food Safety or to run equivalent formal courses in-house. Careful supervision and specific instruction will be required in the interim.

You may also wish to consider training Staff who manage/supervise other food handlers to at least a Level 3 training in Supervising Food Safety or to run equivalent formal courses in-house.

Obtaining a qualification or attending formal training, provided either by an external training body or in-house, is not a legal requirement though many businesses may want their staff to follow this route. Adequate supervision and instruction /on the job training may meet food safety training requirements.

It is important that supervision, instruction and training are re-assessed whenever changes are made to operations, practices or the types of food handled. You should also consider periodic refresher training of your staff as necessary.

It is recommended that you keep records of all staff training including instruction on Basic Hygiene Rules and hand washing techniques. A form, BR6, is provided on page 134 to help you do this. You may wish to ask your local Environmental Health Officer or contact your local College of Further Education for further information on food safety courses.

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## Basic Hygiene Rules



All new food handlers should be instructed in these basic rules before starting work for the first time:

- Keep yourself clean and wear clean clothing.
  - Always wash and dry your hands thoroughly, using the effective hand washing technique: before handling ready-to-eat food, after using the toilet, after handling raw foods, waste or surfaces that might have come into contact with staff handling raw food, before starting work, after each break, after blowing your nose.
  - Tell your supervisor before you handle food if you suffer from any skin, nose, throat, stomach or bowel trouble or infected wound. You are breaking the law if you do not. This is particularly important if returning to work following an illness. If you visit the doctor with any of these ailments remember to say you are a food handler.
  - Tell your supervisor if anyone in your home is ill.
  - Make sure cuts and sores are covered with a waterproof dressing which can be easily seen e.g. blue.
  - Avoid unnecessary handling of food.
  - Do not smoke, eat or drink in a food room, and never cough or sneeze over food.
  - If you see something wrong - tell your supervisor.
  - Keep perishable food either refrigerated or piping hot.
  - Keep the storage, preparation and display of raw and ready-to-eat food strictly separate.
  - When reheating food make sure it is piping hot.
  - Clean as you go. Keep all equipment and surfaces clean and ensure adequate disinfection using appropriate technique.
  - Follow any food safety instructions either on food packaging or from your supervisor.
  - Remember that disposable gloves can become contaminated in the same way as hands so should be used with care. Dispose of gloves after each task, as well as every break, and when they become damaged.
  - Report any signs of pests to your supervisor.
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## Advice on Using a Probe Thermometer

Hand-held digital thermometers can be used when probing foods and for checking air temperatures. **You must ensure that a separate probe thermometer is provided for checking raw and ready-to-eat foods/equipment and that they are clearly identified for each purpose e.g. colour coded.**

### Types of Probe Thermometers

Probe type	Where to use the probe	How to use the probe
<b>Digital thermometer</b> 	These are generally easy to use and accurate. They can be used with lots of foods, but are not suitable to go in the oven.	Clean and disinfect the probe before and after use. Insert it and wait for the display to stabilise before taking a reading.
<b>Infrared Thermometer</b> 	These are quick and easy to use and are useful when there are lots of temperatures to take. They will provide an accurate surface temperature but a probe thermometer is recommended to give an accurate core temperature reading.	Keep the thermometer clean and store in the appropriate area. Point the thermometer at the food and press the button. Wait for the temperature reading to stabilise.

### Looking after your Probe

It is very important to keep the probe part of your thermometer clean, otherwise it could spread food poisoning bacteria to the food you are testing. Clean the probe thoroughly and disinfect it before and after you use it with boiling water or steam.

Do not leave a digital thermometer inside your fridge or freezer, or on hot surfaces. When you are not using it, store it safely. Keep it dry and away from extreme temperatures. Keep the thermometer in its case, if it has one and avoid banging or dropping it. If the battery is low, replace it immediately. It is good practice to keep a spare thermometer and a supply of batteries.

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### Checking your thermometer

**You should check your thermometer at least twice a year to ensure that it is accurate.** The temperature readings of your thermometer should be recorded on the Thermometer Calibration Record [See opposite page]. If you have more than one thermometer, each should be identified by a reference number.

When your local EHO visits, you may also ask them to check the temperature against their own thermometer.

Use the following procedures to carry out your own checks:

#### Low temperature check

Place tip of thermometer probe into crushed ice and a little cold water - leave for 5 minutes and then measure reading [should be between minus 1°C and plus 1°C].

#### High temperature check

Place tip of thermometer probe into the steam from a boiling kettle of water and record reading [should be between 99°C and 101°C]

If you find that your thermometer is faulty, either replace it or return it to the manufacturer/supplier.









# Recording Forms

Keep an accurate check on  
food safety procedures within  
your business





## Recording Forms

When using Safe Food Handling, it is essential that the outcomes of your checks/ monitoring procedures are recorded at a frequency that reflects the nature and size of your business. Similarly, when checks/monitoring reveal that your procedures have not been followed, you must also record what you have done about it (corrective actions). Recording helps you to keep an accurate check on food safety procedures within your business and enables you to demonstrate that you are controlling hazards in an effective manner.

### What paperwork is needed?

Your monitoring checks may be recorded by using one or a combination of the following methods:

1. By using the Recording Forms provided in 'Safe Food Handling'.
2. By using Recording Forms which have been drawn up or adapted by yourself, either in paper copy or electronically.

### Which of the Recording Forms provided in 'Safe Food Handling' should be used?

The Records provided in this manual, if correctly used, will help you to meet and support the requirements of a Food Safety Management Plan based on the HACCP principles and demonstrate it is working effectively.

When following this guide the following Monitoring Records are provided and can be used:

Monitoring Record	Purpose
BR1 - Food Delivery Record	To record the monitoring of incoming deliveries
BR2 - Fridge/Cold room/Display Chill Temperature Records	To record the monitoring of the chill, refrigerator, cold display, units (and possibly the function of your freezer/s)
BR3 - Cooking/Cooling/Reheating Records	To record cooking, cooling and reheating times/ temperatures.
BR4 - Hot Hold/Display Records	To record hot holding temperatures
BR5 - Hygiene Inspection Checklist	To record your own checks of your premises
BR6 - Hygiene Training Records	To record training of your staff
BR7 - Fitness to Work Assessment Form	To record assessment of fitness to work
BR8 - All-in-one Daily Record	To use as an alternative to BR1-4
BR 9 - Customer Delivery Record	To record monitoring of food deliveries to customers

The record forms are also available in coloured booklets, a set of which is supplied with this Pack.



## BR2: Fridge/Cold Room/Display Chill Temperature Records

Month: ..... Year: .....

Temperature Of Fridge/Cold Room/Display Chill*												
[Insert Name or Number of Units]												
Unit											Comments/ Action	Signed
Date	AM	**PM	AM	**PM	AM	**PM	AM	**PM	AM	**PM		
1 <sup>st</sup>												
2 <sup>nd</sup>												
3 <sup>rd</sup>												
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Temperature of food must not exceed 8°C [Fresh raw fish to be stored between 0-4 °C]. \*Some businesses may wish to record freezer temperatures. \*\*It is recommended that fridge temperatures are checked at least once per day. Some businesses may wish to check fridges more frequently.

Manager/Supervisor check on	/ /	/ /	/ /	/ /	/ /
Initials					







## BR5: Hygiene Inspection Checklist

Simple checks of the premises which should be carried out by the Proprietor or Manager regularly\*.

	Satisfactory		Details of Action Taken
	Yes	No	
<b>Hygiene of Food Rooms &amp; Equipment</b>			
Are food rooms and equipment in good condition and well maintained?			
Are food rooms clean and tidy and do staff clean as they go including difficult areas?			
Is equipment easy to clean and kept in a clean condition?			
Are all food and hand contact surfaces e.g. work surfaces, fridge handles, probe thermometer, in good condition and cleaned/ disinfected regularly?			
Are suitable cleaning chemicals available, i.e. disinfectant/sanitiser with BS EN 1276:1997[2009]/ BS EN 13697:2001 and stored correctly?			
Are separate cleaning cloths used in clean areas? If they are reused are they laundered in a boil wash?			
<b>Food Storage</b>			
Are deliveries appropriately stored immediately?			
Is ready-to-eat food stored in sufficiently separate and clearly identifiable areas in the fridges and freezers?			
Is food in fridges/freezers covered?			
Are high risk foods date coded, codes checked daily and stock rotated?			
Is outer packaging removed from ready-to-eat foods before being placed into a designated clean area?			
Are dried goods stored correctly e.g. in suitable room, off the floor, in covered containers?			
Are freezers working properly?			
Are fridges and freezers defrosted regularly?			
<b>Food Handling Practices</b>			
Are ready-to-eat foods prepared in separate rooms or clean areas?			
Are separate utensils and equipment used for ready-to-eat foods unless disinfected in a dishwasher? Is it in good working order and serviced regularly?			
Is colour coded utensils/chopping board system in use and correctly used?			
Is separate complex equipment provided for raw and ready-to-eat foods and correctly located?			
Is wrapping/packaging materials for ready-to-eat foods stored in the clean area?			
Do separate staff handle ready-to-eat foods or are alternative controls being followed i.e. changing clothing and washing hands before handling ready-to-eat food?			
Are staff handling food as little as possible?			
Are high risk foods prepared in small batches and returned to the fridge immediately after handling/ preparation?			
Is food cooled as quickly as possible, away from raw food and other sources of contamination?			
Are vegetables/fruit/salads trimmed and washed thoroughly before use unless labelled as 'ready-to-eat'?			
Are separate probe thermometers provided, correctly used and cleaned/disinfected before and after use?			

	Satisfactory		Details of Action Taken
	Yes	No	
Is a separate cash register used by staff serving ready-to-eat foods or are controls being followed to ensure staff wash hands before using the cash register?			
Are ready-to-eat foods kept separate on display and adequately screened from customers?			
Are staff using the correct equipment for serving food?			
Are frozen foods defrosted safely?			
Are controls in place to prevent contamination by chemicals/foreign bodies e.g. glass, packaging materials, bolts, rust, cleaning chemicals?			
Are staff aware of food allergy hazards?			
<b>Personal Hygiene</b>			
Are staff fit to work, wearing clean, suitable protective clothing and following personal hygiene rules particularly hand washing?			
Are wash hand basins clean with hot water, soap and hygienic hand drying facilities?			
Are wash hand basins used for hand washing only and is effective hand washing by staff regularly observed?			
Are staff toilets and changing facilities clean and tidy?			
<b>Pest Control</b>			
Are premises pest proofed and free from any signs of pests?			
Where necessary are external doors/ windows fitted with suitable flyscreens?			
Are insectocutors (if provided) properly maintained?			
Is food properly protected from risk of contamination by pests?			
<b>Waste Control</b>			
Is waste in food rooms stored correctly?			
Is food waste stored correctly outside and is the refuse area kept clean?			
Is waste meat stored in separate bins labelled 'Category 3' - Not for Human Consumption', if applicable.			
Is unfit food/returns clearly labelled and stored separately from other foods?			
<b>Checks and Record Keeping</b>			
Are all checks properly taken and recorded?			
Has appropriate corrective action been taken where necessary?			
Are record sheets up-to-date, checked and verified?			
Are equipment time/temperature combinations [page 53] regularly cross-checked?			
<b>Review [4 weekly]</b>			
Any new suppliers and approved list updated?			
Any new products? If yes, are steps in Safe Food Handling updated as necessary?			
Any new food handling methods or equipment? If yes, are steps in Safe Food Handling updated as necessary?			

Name: ..... Position: ..... Signed: ..... Date: .....

\* Circle Frequency Checks Carried Out By Proprietor Or Manager

Weekly  Fortnightly  Monthly

## BR6: Hygiene Training Record

Name: ..... Position: ..... Date of Employment .....

### In House Training/Instruction on Safe Food Handling Pack

Nature of Training	Dates	Trainer	Employee Signature
Instruction On Basic Hygiene Rules [Page 122]			
Training on steps used in your business (Page 11-92)			
Purchase, Delivery/Receipt, Collection & Traceability			
Storage			
Preparation And Handling			
Cold Serve/Display			
Defrosting			
Cooking			
Cooling/Freezing			
Reheating			
Hot Hold/Display			
Vacuum Packing			
Transport and Distribution			
Physical/Chemical Contamination			
Food Allergies			
Other Step(s)			
Training on general hygiene requirements (Pages 93-125)			
Cleaning			
Pest Control			
Waste			
Maintenance			
Personal Hygiene [including hand washing technique]			
Advice on using a Thermometer			

### Further Training

Nature of training e.g. CIEH/RSH/RIPH level 2/3 Award in Food Safety in Catering, in-house, refresher	Course provider	Date Completed	Employee Signature

Copies Of Any Certificates Should Be Kept With This Form

## BR7: Fitness To Work Assessment Form For Use By Employers

This form may be used for existing food handlers, for new food handlers on recruitment and for return of food handlers to work after illness.

Name Of Employee: ..... Date of Assessment: .....

**Reason For Assessment:** [Tick Box]

Existing food handler

Pre-employment assessment

Return to work after illness

1 Have you suffered from diarrhoea and/or vomiting within the last 48 hours?..... **YES/NO**  
If no, have you in the last 48 hours taken any medication to control diarrhoea  
and/or vomiting?..... **YES/NO**

2 At present are you suffering from:  
i) infected wounds, skin infections or sores?..... **YES/NO**  
ii) boils, styes or septic fingers?..... **YES/NO**  
iii) discharge from eye, ear or gums/mouth? ..... **YES/NO**

3 Have you ever had, or are you known to be a carrier of typhoid or paratyphoid?..... **YES/NO**

4 In the last 21 days have you been in contact with anyone, at home or abroad,  
who may have been suffering from typhoid or paratyphoid?..... **YES/NO**

**If the answer to any question is 'yes', the individual should not be permitted to handle food or enter food handling areas if there is any likelihood of direct or indirect contamination. Further advice should be sought e.g. from your Environmental Health Officer and/or Doctor.**

### Action Taken

.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....

Owner/Manager ..... Date .....

I hereby declare that the information I have given is correct and I undertake to notify my employer/manager if I suffer from any of the above illnesses/conditions.

Employee ..... Date .....



**BR8: All-in-one Daily Record Page 2 of 2**

Cooking/Cooling/Reheating Records												
Cooking*					Cooling			Reheating*			Comments/Actions	
Food	Time Started Cooking **	Time Finished Cooking	Core Temp.	Sign [Initials]	Date	Time Into Fridge/ Blast Chill/ Freezer	Sign [Initials]	Date	Core Temp.	Sign [Initials]		

\* Core temperature above 75°C. \*\* It is not necessary to record the time started cooking, if the core temperature is checked.

Hot Hold/Display Records						
[For food to be held hot for more than 2 hours]						
Food	Time Into Hot Hold	Core Temp* After 2 Hrs On Display	Core Temp* After 4 Hrs On Display	Core Temp* After 6 Hrs On Display	Comments/Actions	Sign

\*Keep hot food above 63°C

Manager/Supervisor check on \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_ Sign

<b>Comments</b>	
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