

FOOD EVENT SAFETY

(For assistance, please contact EHS at (402) 472-4925, or visit our web site at <http://ehs.unl.edu/>)

Student and faculty organizations intending to serve food at an event held on the premises or in facilities owned by the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, must register with the Student Involvement Office and adhere to the safe food handling practices described in this SOP. These safe practices will help reduce the risk of food-borne illnesses.

Food Selection

Some kinds of foods readily support the growth of pathogenic microorganisms such as *Clostridium botulinum* and *Salmonella enteritis*. Following is a list of prohibited foods.

- Home-canned or packaged foods.
- Crème pies, desserts with meringue, and other dishes with raw eggs.
- Any food additives used that were not purchased from a licensed vendor.
- Any meat not purchased from a USDA-inspected facility or commercial vendor of inspected meat (for example an approved source would be a grocery store or the UNL Meat Lab).
- Foods containing alcohol unless the alcohol has been evaporated in the cooking process.
- Mushroom species picked in the wild.
- Raw meats or raw seafood.

Personal Hygiene

The importance of observing good personal hygiene when serving or preparing food cannot be overemphasized.

- Do not participate in preparing or serving food when infected with open sores or communicable illnesses.
- Wear clean clothes when preparing or serving food. Use a clean apron. Avoid jewelry.
- Wash hands and arms with soap and water before handling food items. Scrub hands and nails thoroughly for at least 20 seconds. Use paper towels for hand drying rather than common cloth towels.
- Wear plastic gloves when preparing and serving food. Change gloves between preparation steps, particularly if preparation involves meat, egg, or dairy products.
- Re-wash hands and put on a clean pair of gloves after sneezing, touching face, using the restroom, or touching anything besides the food, utensils or disinfected area, and after each preparation or serving function.

- Restrain hair if it is long and don't engage in personal grooming when handling food.
- Immediately report to EHS if diagnosed with Hepatitis or other potential foodborne illness immediately following a food preparation/serving event.

Food Preparation and Storage

The risk of food-borne illness is greatly reduced when food is properly prepared and maintained at proper temperatures.

- Prepare food the same day as the event.
- Food preparation areas should be free of vermin and protected from insects (e.g., screened)
- Thoroughly wash and disinfect all cooking utensils, kitchen equipment, and work surfaces before use and between steps in the preparation process, particularly when working with meat, egg or dairy products. Use 1 part chlorine bleach to 9 parts of warm water (75°F) as a disinfectant
- Scrub and sanitize all cutting boards, knives and electric slicers immediately after contact with raw or cooked meats, fish or poultry and between changes in use.
- Thoroughly wash all raw fruits and vegetables before using. Hold frozen food at 0° F or lower during delivery and storage.
- If raw food is frozen, thaw it under refrigeration. Do not thaw frozen food at room temperature.
- Reach an internal temperature of 165° F to 170° F for foods to be held for serving. Maintain a minimum temperature of 140° F during the serving period.
- Keep hot foods hot (>135° F) and cold foods cold (<41° F).
- Keep ice covered and in a device that drains the melted water.
- Re-pan in shallow containers any cooked food to be held at refrigerated temperatures. Refrigerate immediately. The center of the food should reach 40° F within four hours.
- Never serve questionable food. If in doubt, throw it out.
- Avoid cross-contamination of foods during preparation, storage and service.
- The use of charcoal grills is discouraged. Use propane grills at least 25 feet from a building.

Emergency Procedures

- Know what to do in case of a personal injury or emergency, such as fire or tornadoes.
- Know the location of fire extinguishers in food serving areas.