

Food Safety Guide for Food Demonstrators

FOOD SAMPLING IN RETAIL FOOD STORES

Food manufacturers use many methods to promote their products. One such method is to prepare samples of the product in a retail atmosphere and allow customers to taste the food before purchasing.

In-store demonstrators are used by some companies to prepare food samples and distribute them to the public.

The following guidelines for the in-store demonstrator will help ensure that the public receives the safest food possible.

In-Store Demonstrator

- ◆ Wash hands prior to handling food.
- ◆ If using disposable gloves, replace regularly or when contaminated.
- ◆ Wear appropriate clothing (i.e. clean aprons).
- ◆ Use hair control (i.e. hair nets, hats, etc.).

Food Handling Procedures

- ◆ Ensure that all food served is from an approved source.
- ◆ Pre-cut raw perishable samples in the store's facilities before taking to the sampling table.
- ◆ Cut pre-made or pre-cooked frozen foods to sampling size after cooking and always follow manufacturer's cooking instructions to ensure that proper internal temperatures are achieved.
- ◆ Keep perishable samples below 4°C or above 60°C and serve immediately.
- ◆ Cook ground meat products to an internal temperature of 71°C and cook fresh poultry products to an internal temperature of 85°C.
- ◆ Use a calibrated thermometer to monitor food temperatures.
- ◆ Use separate utensils for raw and cooked foods.
- ◆ Prevent the public from handling the samples by handing samples to the customer, or by using toothpicks or single-use containers. Reusable customer utensils are not allowed.
- ◆ Replace samples if they are displayed for more than one hour.

- ◆ Any time the booth is left unattended, all open or exposed food shall be covered or removed from the demonstration area.
- ◆ Discard leftover or contaminated samples.

Cleaning and Sanitizing

- ◆ Wash and sanitize all equipment including cutting boards, utensils, cooking equipment and counter surfaces before and after use. The sink facilities in the store may be used for this purpose. An approved dishwasher or a 2-compartment sink (at a minimum) must be accessible on-site whenever equipment or utensils are used.

- ◆ Use one of the two sanitizing solutions:

1. BLEACH

Use a chlorine solution of not less than 100 ppm. If using household bleach, the following approximate dilutions apply:

- One tablespoon or 1/2 ounce of bleach per gallon of water; OR
- One-half teaspoon or 2 millilitres of bleach per litre of water.

Prepare diluted bleach fresh daily. Store bleach solution in a spray bottle that is labeled accordingly.

2. QUATERNARY AMMONIUM COMPOUNDS (QUATS)

Use a quats solution that has a strength of not less than 200 ppm. Because there are several examples of quats available on the market, ensure that the chemical is suitable for food contact surfaces and follow manufacturer's recommendations.

Handwash Stations

Handwash stations are not required in the demonstration booth if the operator can demonstrate that:

- They are operating within an approved facility with adequate facilities.
- They have reasonable access to the kitchen and hand sinks.
- They are doing minimal to limited food handling (heating and portioning of samples).
- They are able to leave the booth unattended to wash their hands if necessary.
- The booth operates two hours or less between breaks and/or restocking.
- Raw perishable samples are pre-cut in the approved kitchen facilities.
- There is minimal direct handling of food products. Utensils rather than hands are used whenever possible.

Where the demonstration booth does not meet the above conditions, the sink requirements for sampling at farmers' markets will apply.

For more information, please contact your nearest Environmental Public Health office.

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