

PREVENTING CROSS-CONTAMINATION DURING RECEIVING AND STORAGE

Objective: To review with your employees the proper procedures to follow during receiving and storage to prevent cross-contamination.

Food safety practices begin long before preparation or service of meals occurs. To be sure the food you serve is safe, it must first arrive at your establishment safe. From there the safety is up to you. Begin discussion by explaining to employees that the final responsibility of food safety lies with them. Preventing cross-contamination during receiving and storage is key to ensuring the safety of the food later.

→ *Review with your employees how to prevent cross-contamination during receiving:*

Although the main focus is the quality and safety of the food received, there are a few steps that can be taken to prevent cross-contamination from occurring during receiving.

- ♣ Make sure the receiving area is clean and well-lighted.
- ♣ Check how foods are stored in the delivery truck. This is especially important if a variety of items come in a single delivery. Make sure raw meats are stored away from produce and ready-to-eat foods and that the truck is relatively clean.
- ♣ Have clean hand trucks, carts, dollies, and containers available in the receiving area. If products need to be washed or broken down and rewrapped, make sure a clean and sanitized work space is available.
- ♣ It is important to clean and sanitize thermometers between using them with different types of food.

→ *Review with your employees how to prevent cross-contamination during storage:*

Once food has been inspected for quality and safety, you want to make sure it stays that way. Although food should be moved into storage quickly, care must be taken to prevent cross-contamination at this step in the flow of food.

- ♣ Keep storage areas clean and dry. Spills and leaks should be cleaned up immediately to keep from contaminating other foods. Consider cleaning and sanitizing on a weekly schedule.
- ♣ All foods should be properly wrapped or stored in clean and moisture proof materials. This will do a lot to prevent the food from dripping on to other foods or from contaminants from seeping into packaging.
- ♣ Store raw meat, poultry and fish separately from cooked and ready to eat foods, in a separate cooler if possible. If this is not possible always store prepared ready-to-eat foods above raw meat, poultry and fish. This will prevent raw product juices from dripping onto the prepared or ready-to-eat foods.
- ♣ Foods should be stored in this order: ready-to-eat and cooked foods on the top shelf; below that should be fish; follow with whole raw meats, then ground raw meats on the next two shelves; raw chicken is always stored on the bottom shelf. This order is based on final minimum internal cooking temperatures.



Objective: To review the proper storage procedures to prevent cross-contamination.



Step 1: Draw a large refrigerator with five shelves on a flipchart. Do this again on another flipchart.



Step 2: List several different types of foods to the right of the refrigerator. List the same foods on the other flipchart.



Step 3: Have employees break into teams.



Step 4: The first team to finish with the foods on the correct shelves wins!

