

Food Safety Series (No.7)

April 2019

## Preparation and Service of Food

A Guide for Departments and Faculties

WEB VERSION



**These guidelines have been drawn up taking guidance from current food safety laws and regulations** (see Food Safety – An introduction to legislation for University premises).

### Preparation

Food preparation includes handling, decanting, cutting or arranging of unwrapped food (by anyone other than the final consumer) e.g. cutting sandwiches purchased from supermarkets into smaller units and transferring to a plate.

All food and drink must be prepared by appropriately trained personnel and consumed in appropriate food grade areas (**not** laboratories/workshops) that are free from sources of contamination e.g. biological (pathogens, GM), chemical (oils, acids, degreasers etc.), physical (glass, dust, swarf etc.).

Where food handled in research and teaching areas is used for human consumption extra precautions must be taken and a hazard analysis performed.

In food preparation rooms external doors and windows should remain closed (unless screened) to prevent access of pests such as flies etc. that could contaminate food.

Access to food preparation areas must be restricted to essential staff only and food safety rules adhered to.

All surfaces, boards, utensils, crockery, pans etc. must be cleaned and disinfected before and after use and must be in a good state of repair.

Good personal hygiene controls are essential for anyone preparing food, especially hand hygiene. For further information on personal hygiene requirements please see the 'Personal Hygiene Requirements for Individuals Preparing

or Serving Food' leaflet.

Individuals suffering from the symptoms of food poisoning e.g. diarrhoea, vomiting or upset stomach or had symptoms within the last 48 hrs or has a family member with diarrhoea and/or sickness for more than 24 hrs **MUST** be excluded from food preparation and service areas and must not come into contact with food to be consumed by others. If in doubt contact the University Head of Operations.

Food items should be checked by trained personnel to ensure any packaging is intact; the foods are within their "use by" date and free from visual signs of contamination e.g. mould, insects. Additional checks should be carried out to check for signs of tampering, damage etc.

Certain foods have the potential to induce allergic reactions in individuals that are sensitive to those foods e.g. nuts, shellfish, sesame seeds etc. Ingredient lists should be checked for recipe changes or known added allergen added. Labelling should be retained to Allergen information sheets. (See Allergy leaflet) .

Food for special diets or free-from food must be protected from contamination.

Food should not be prepared too far in advance and should not be kept at room temperature for longer than necessary during preparation (maximum 90 minutes).

Potable water (suitable for drinking) must be used to wash and prepare food or make ice (**never** use laboratory ice makers).

Fresh fruit, salads and vegetables should be rinsed in potable (drinking) water if they are to be served raw (unless they are purchased pre-

washed).

Food should remain covered and protected until required to prevent contamination (either in its original packaging, a sealed food container or using food grade cling-film or foil etc).

Direct handling of foods should be minimised i.e. use tongs and utensils or disposable gloves (food grade) where possible.

It is important if people request information about a particular food, that accurate information is provided at all times. If there is any uncertainty, never guess.

In cases of alleged illness or injury due to food the procedure detailed in the 'Food Complaints' leaflet should be followed and University Head of Operations contacted. An initial investigation should be carried out and any remedial action taken to prevent reoccurrence.

Where there is concern the University Head of Operations should be contacted for advice. Complaints must be recorded and records kept for a minimum of 4 years. The University Insurance Manager must be informed of all complaints.

### **Chilled Food**

Once removed from refrigeration chilled foods must be eaten within 4 hours. After this time they may be considered unsafe for human consumption and should be thrown away (including surplus food left out for students and staff).

### **Hot Food**

When serving hot food it must be held at temperatures above 63°C or eaten within 2 hours. After this time it must be thrown away

(including surplus food left out for students and staff).

It is important to cook or reheat food thoroughly (especially meat/poultry). It should be piping hot all the way through to the centre of the thickest part of the food and should reach an internal temperature of at least 75°C.

Temperatures must be taken using a clean disinfected calibrated probe thermometer.

Extra care should be taken when using microwave ovens as they do not heat evenly and some parts of the food may not be hot.

Food should not be reheated more than once.

### **Further information**

- Food Standards Agency website ([www.food.gov.uk](http://www.food.gov.uk))
- Other leaflets in the Food Safety Series
- from MAS Environmental ([www.masenv.co.uk/fsq](http://www.masenv.co.uk/fsq))

### **Other leaflets in the Food Safety Guidance Notes Series**

- 1 Food Safety – An introduction to legislation for University premises

- 2 Catering Options - A guide for departments and faculties
- 3 Staff Kitchens and Tearooms – General hygiene requirements
- 4 Food Hygiene Training Requirements
- 5 Guidance on Departmental Barbecue Safety
- 6 Purchase, Delivery and Storage of Food
- 8 Personal Hygiene Requirements for Individuals Preparing or Serving Food
- 9 Cleaning and Pest Control in Food Preparation Areas
- 10 Food Safety Guidance for Departmental Christmas Parties
- 11 Food Safety for Charity Events – A guide for departments and faculties
- 12 Food Complaints - A guide for departments and University operated food outlets
- 13 Allergens

**University Centre  
Granta Place  
Mill Lane  
Cambridge CB2 1RU**

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