

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

Summer 2013 (June/July/Aug)

Steps to Subdue Salmonella

Salmonella is a food borne illness caused by bacteria. Salmonella is one of the most commonly reported food borne illnesses. It is of particular importance to use preventive measures when cooking foods that have the potential of causing Salmonella.

Foods involved in Salmonella outbreaks	Symptoms include
Poultry	Diarrhea
Beef	Abdominal cramps
Milk	Headache
Shell Eggs	Nausea
Seafood	Fever
Fresh sliced produce (e.g. melons, tomatoes, raw sprouts)	Vomiting
Improperly cooked custards, sauces and pastry creams	
Preventive Measures	
Cook poultry, ground beef and eggs thoroughly.	
Do not serve undercooked poultry, beef and eggs.	
Avoid cross-contamination by washing hands, kitchen surfaces, and utensils with soap and water immediately after they have been in contact with raw meat or poultry.	
Always wash your hands with soap and water after using the restroom.	
Wash all produce thoroughly.	
Properly cool cooked meat and meat products.	
Refrigerate food.	
Store raw meat, poultry and seafood away from other foods in refrigerator.	
Never place cooked food on an unwashed plate that previously held raw meat.	
Avoid eating foods that contain raw eggs (e.g. caesar salad dressing). If you must use raw eggs, use liquid pasteurized eggs.	

Salmonella like all other food borne illness is 100% preventable. Use caution and care when receiving, storing, handling, cooking and serving foods. Knowing what Salmonella is and understanding the environment in which they grow is the only way to control their growth. It is in your control to prevent the growth of bacteria and potential growth of Salmonella. Remember a safe and healthy customer is a happy customer.

Sources:

www.cdc.gov/salmonella

www.mayoclinic.com/health/salmonella



OPEN DOORS AND WINDOWS

Many food establishments have been noted with their doors and windows open to the outer air and failing to keep their screen doors closed, if they even have a screen door. These are doors and windows leading to the exterior environment whether they are the front, side, or back doors and windows.

Chapter 24 of the New Jersey State Sanitary Code, 8:24 – 6.2(n) is very clear regarding this issue. The following are requirements from this State Code for the protection of outer openings:

“Outer openings of a retail food establishment shall be protected against the entry of insects and rodents by:

- Filling or closing holes and other gaps along floors, wall, and ceilings;
- Closed, tight-fitting windows; and
- Solid, self-closing, tight-fitting doors.”

All openings to the outer air shall be effectively protected against the entrance of insects and rodents by using self-closing doors, closed windows, screening, controlled air currents, or other effective means. Screen doors shall be self-closing; and screens for windows, doors, skylights, and other openings to the outer air shall be tight fitting and **FREE OF BREAKS OR TEARS.**

There will be a **ZERO TOLERANCE** policy about this issue as we have been emphasizing this request for years. All food establishments are expected to comply. **Inspectors will issue signed notices of violation and repeat offenders will be issued summonses for non-compliance.**



Pests such as insects and rodents can pose serious problems for establishments. Not only are they unsightly to customers, they also damage food, supplies, and facilities. The greatest danger from pests comes from their ability to spread disease, including food-borne illnesses.

Preventing insects from entering your establishment is probably the least expensive, as well as the safest, method of insect control. If you can prevent insects from entering your establishment, you will reduce the need to use pesticides, which not only helps the environment, but reduces safety hazards to employees. A prevention program for insect control is far better than an expensive elimination program. It should include a complete sanitation and employee hygiene program, and proper maintenance and upkeep of the food establishment.

**Have you, or your designated Food Manager,
been completing a Self-Inspection on a regular basis?**

COOLING FOODS SAFELY & PROPERLY

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), in 2011 approximately 48 million people (1 in 6) got sick from food borne illnesses, with 128,000 hospitalizations and 3,000 deaths.

Food borne illnesses are 100% preventable, and one way to prevent food borne illnesses is to properly cool down foods. The goal of the cool down process is to get the food from 135°F to 41°F as fast as possible. The New Jersey State Administrative Code, Chapter 24 N.J.A.C. 8:24-3.5(d) 1, "Sanitation in Retail Food Establishments and Food and Beverage Vending Machines", states that **foods that are cooked shall be cooled within 2 hours from 135°F to 70°F and then you have 4 hours to get it from 70°F to 41°F.**

Cooling can be completed by using one or more of the following methods:

1. Placing foods in shallow pans
2. Separating the food into smaller or thinner portions
3. Using rapid cooling equipment (i.e. blast chiller)
4. Stirring the food in a container placed in an ice water bath
5. Using containers that facilitate heat transfer (i.e ice wands)
6. Adding ice as an ingredient; or other effective methods.
- 7.



When storing food in a refrigerator or using a cold holding unit for cooling, you have to consider some other things:

- Make sure that the food is arranged in a way that there will be maximum heat transfer. For instance, stacking containers or covering them will not allow the heat to escape.
- Store in a place that will not allow contamination of another product that is stored above.

The person in charge should routinely monitor employees to ensure safe and proper cooling practices are followed.

Source

Estimates of Foodborne Illness in the United States. (2013, February 6). Retrieved May 20, 2013, from Centers for Disease Control and Prevention: <http://www.cdc.gov/foodborneburden/index.html#>

Licensing News

Coming this summer, the Department of Health will launch an on-line application, renewal and payment process for retail licenses. The service will enhance the credit card payment options already offered through an agreement with VitalChek Network, a LexisNexis Company. The Department's partnership with VitalChek began by serving customers who needed a way to purchase vital records (birth, death, and marriage certificates) via the internet and has since added point-of-service credit card payment for any type of transaction.

Now, with the use of licensing applications developed by National Geomatica, VitalChek's On-Line Payment Services will allow business owners to submit license applications and renewals electronically. License fees may be paid on-line with a credit card or e-check. Payments can be made when the Department is closed, and it can't be lost in the mail! This service is available for a nominal fee to VitalChek - \$2.50 or 3.25%, whichever is greater, per transaction.

Health Department staff will be notified when a payment transaction has been made. License fees, and other pertinent information in our records will be verified. The License Clerk will contact the owner/payee if there are any questions or problems. Licenses will then be processed and mailed - just as they have always been. We hope that this additional application/renewal/payment option news is as exciting for you as it is for us. Look for the announcement of the launch date.

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FOOD FOR THOUGHT is a quarterly publication issued by the Englewood Health Department for food establishments in Englewood. Content contributed by Fausto Garcia, Jr. and Jennifer Galarza, Registered Environmental Health Specialists.

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