

# Food Safety Protocol for Food Preparation & Demonstrations

*UW-Extension educators should follow these guidelines for safe food handling and preparation for teaching events.*

## PLANNING

- **Consider your teaching objectives.** Each food demonstration and food sample that is included as part of a lesson or other teaching activity needs to be **directly related to**, and reinforcing of, the **learner objectives** for the teaching session.
- **Select recipes carefully.** If you are with WNEP, see “How to Select and Use Recipes in Nutrition Education” ([www.uwex.edu/ces/wnep/teach/index.cfm](http://www.uwex.edu/ces/wnep/teach/index.cfm)).
- **Keep food safety in mind.** As you review the lesson plan and recipe(s) you are preparing to teach, keep food safety foremost in your mind. Consider:
  - **Physical facilities:** What does the teaching facility have in the way of counter space, running water, sinks, electrical outlets for hotplates or crock pots, oven or refrigerator space, and accessible restrooms? Remember, you will need to keep hot foods hot, cold foods cold, and maintain adequate sanitation.
  - **Secure environment:** Make arrangements for teaching space that is free from disturbance from non-learners and where animals are not permitted.
  - **Hand washing facilities:** Make sure your teaching facility has sufficient resources so your participants can wash their hands! You may choose to carry a plastic bottle of liquid hand soap, a roll of paper towels, and a couple of trash bags if you are not sure the restrooms at the facility will be well equipped. A pump hand sanitizer is recommended for class participants to use when returning from the restroom, after sneezing or coughing, and before helping with demonstrations or sampling foods. An instant hand sanitizer does not substitute for hand washing with soap and water, but may, at times, be all that is available. Remember, your teaching should model best practices! More information about hand washing is available at: <http://www.uwex.edu/ces/wnep/files/washing.pdf>
  - **Food from safe sources:** Food used in class demonstrations or samplings must be from a safe source. Highly perishable foods such as meat, poultry, fish, milk and eggs should be from a grocery store. Home-grown vegetables may be OK if clean and handled properly.
  - **Keep cold foods cold:** Foods that are purchased refrigerated must be kept cold (40°F or below). You will need to consider access to refrigerator space in your office and/or access to coolers and ice packs as you plan.
  - **Keep hot foods hot:** Hot foods can be prepared ahead of time and cooled and reheated, or kept hot. Meat and poultry must be cooked to safe temperatures: <http://www.befoodsafe.org/temperature>. Hot food must be held at 165°F or above. Crock pots and Nesco roasters are effective for hot-holding but they are not to be used for re-heating of cold food.
  - **Clean up:** Think ahead to the supplies you may need in order to clean the teaching area before a demonstration or food sampling, and during and following the lesson. All surfaces, utensils and equipment should be cleaned and sanitized before you begin, as needed during a lesson, and at the end of the program. Cleaning and sanitizing is a two-step process. **First**, remove visible food debris, then wash all surfaces and utensils with soapy water, and finally rinse in clean water. **Second**, sanitize in a dilute bleach solution. The dilute bleach sanitizer is prepared as follows: 1 Tablespoon bleach per gallon of water, or 1 teaspoon bleach per quart. Always transport and store the bleach solution in a container with a tight-fitting lid; or prepare on site with clean running water. A glass jar or plastic spray bottle work well for holding the sanitizer. Allow materials to drip-dry or air-dry, no final rinsing needed.

## PREPARATION OF FOOD BEFORE TEACHING

Depending on the food or recipe that will be part of your lesson, some food preparation may need to be done prior to your arrival at the teaching site. Preparation of food items or recipes for any demonstrations or lessons should be done in a kitchen that would meet licensing standards – a home kitchen would not! Some county Extension offices do have a suitable kitchen facility while others do not. If your Extension doesn't have an acceptable kitchen facility, there are probably other kitchens in your community where you could do food preparation (and even teaching).

Here are some examples of facilities that may have licensed kitchens:

- Bank community rooms
- WIC centers
- Community Centers
- Senior Centers
- Local VFW/Masonic Lodge, etc.
- Churches
- Food Banks

If at all possible, try to hold classes at a facility with a licensed kitchen so the food won't have to be transported. Your county public health office can help you when considering acceptable food preparation areas: <http://dhs.wisconsin.gov/localhealth/index.htm>

## TRANSPORTING FOOD & SUPPLIES

Consult this check list when transporting food and supplies.

- Locate necessary cooking equipment and supplies (as well as the lesson plan, handouts and evaluation).
- Pack extras! Several sets of utensils are recommended for each lesson so you will have clean, sanitized utensils at the ready for multiple dishes or if utensils are dropped during the lesson/demonstration.
- Take two! Pack two sets of cutting boards, one for raw meats and the other for ready-to-eat foods.
- Pack equipment and supplies for transport to the teaching site in a plastic container with a tight-fitting lid or in a food-safe plastic bag to keep equipment clean. [Traveling containers must be emptied, washed, and sanitized each month.]
- Pack food not needing refrigeration in a container with a tight-fitting lid.
- Transport foods that need to stay cold (40°F or below) in a cooler with ice packs or ice. If you are traveling for longer than 30 minutes, take the temperature of your product when you arrive at the facility where you will be conducting the class. The temperature of cold foods needs to stay at or below 40°F.
- Keep hot foods at, or above, 165°F during transport and holding. These foods must also be kept tightly covered during transport.
- HAVE YOU PACKED YOUR FOOD THERMOMETER?
- Protect food and supplies from contamination during transport. If you normally travel with pets, trash, recycling, etc. in your car when you are not working, be sure to cover the trunk/storage compartment or seats with a clean sheet, towel, or plastic bag before loading equipment to keep pet hair and dirt off food and equipment. This will keep the risk of food contamination at a minimum.

## FOOD DEMONSTRATIONS AND SAMPLES

- **Dress appropriately** for teaching events involving food. Be sure your clothing is clean and appropriate. Remove jewelry, including rings and bracelets that can trap food and/or germs. Keep your hair away from the face. Use a clean apron.
- **Begin by washing** your hands thoroughly, e.g. "[Hand Washing Guidelines for WNEP Teaching](#)"

([www.uwex.edu/ces/wnep/teach/index.cfm](http://www.uwex.edu/ces/wnep/teach/index.cfm)), and after handling raw food or trash, touching hair, face or body, eating or drinking, etc.

- **Wash** all fruits and vegetables before cutting. If this is to be done prior to your lesson, place the washed and cut items in clean (not re-used) sealed plastic bags.
- **Wash** the lids of all cans to be opened. Cleaning with a paper towel that has been moistened with sanitizing solution is preferable if you do not have a sink with clean water available.
- **Note any potentially allergic ingredients** in your demonstration: milk or milk powder, soy-based ingredients (not oils), nuts, peanuts, eggs, fish and seafood with a small sign alerting learners to these potential allergens. It is not UWEX's role, however, to counsel participants on food allergies.
- **Wear disposable plastic food-handling gloves** when handling raw or ready-to-eat foods. Have participants who are helping with any food prep of raw product also wear food-handling gloves. (Remember to wash hands even if wearing gloves). Use of disposable gloves is not at this time required for cooked foods, but is a good idea. You **DO** need to wear gloves if you have cuts or scrapes on your hands (even if they are bandaged).
- **Use clean serving utensils and containers** for samples offered to participants.
- **Offer tastes** or samples of foods, not entire servings, served with disposable dishware and utensils. Offer a napkin or paper towel!
- **Discard** any samples that have been offered to participants but not eaten. Left-over non-perishable items that have not been served to participants may be distributed to learners, i.e. bread, fresh produce, etc. Bring along new resealing plastic bags for this purpose.

### CLEAN UP & STORAGE

While still basking in the glow from a well-received program, it's time for clean-up!

- Wipe down all surfaces.
- Wash, rinse and sanitize all utensils and equipment used during the lesson. Remember to include the can opener as well. Most licensed kitchens have three compartment sinks that make this step easier. Remember that cleaning and sanitizing is a multi-step process: physical removal of food, washing in warm soapy water, rinsing in clear water and then sanitizing (usually using a dilute chlorine bleach solution). If a 3-compartment sink isn't available, bring along a dishpan for sanitizing. Submerge rinsed items in a sanitizing solution (warm water with 1 tablespoon of bleach per gallon of water) in the third sink compartment or plastic dishpan. Leave items submerged for 1 minute. (Occasionally your equipment may be too large to submerge in the sanitizing solution. Pour some of the solution into the item and gently swirl the item to swish around the sanitizer).
- Allow sanitized items to air-dry, or, if time does not allow, be sure to use a freshly laundered dish towel or paper towels. Towels used in food demonstrations must be laundered in a washing machine as soon as possible after a demonstration (and no later than that evening). All linens must be laundered with soap and hot/warm water and dried immediately after in a clothes drier (not hung on the line). Dish rags should not be used.
- Clean up all spills of meat, meat juice, or other potentially hazardous foods with paper towels.
- Store extra dry goods in clean containers with tight-fitting lids.



*Additional information on food safety issues or food borne illness may be found at: [www.foodsafety.wisc.edu](http://www.foodsafety.wisc.edu)*

Adapted with permission, from: "Food Safety Protocol for EFNEP/FSNEP Food Preparation & Demonstration," Montana State University Extension Service (May 2003). B. Ingham. [bhingham@wisc.edu](mailto:bhingham@wisc.edu)