

Food Safety Conversation No4: Cross Contamination

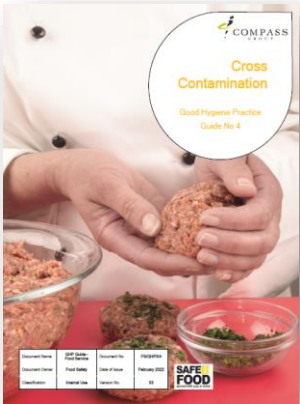
Key Learning

What You Need To Know



Cross contamination is one of the main ways food poisoning can occur. In order to look after the safety of our customers and provide safe food to eat you need to ensure that cross contamination of food is avoided

- Cross contamination is the transfer of harmful bacteria from raw foods to ready to eat foods.
- Cross contamination must be avoided at all times as ready to eat food will not be cooked / re-heated further which would kill any harmful bacteria that have transferred to the food.
- Cross contamination can occur from:
 - Direct contact with raw foods such as raw meat and poultry, fish and shellfish, raw fruit and vegetables;
 - Indirect contact from the transfer of bacteria via hands, clothing, knives, chopping boards, equipment, work surfaces.
- You can prevent cross contamination by:
 - Checking deliveries to ensure raw & ready to eat foods are separate;
 - Store raw foods separate from ready to eat foods, either in separate refrigerators or raw food at the bottom, below ready to eat foods;
 - Designate a separate raw food preparation area within the kitchen where only raw food is to be handled and prepared;
 - If separate areas are not available, prepare ready to eat foods separately, before raw foods;
 - Ensure all work surfaces are cleaned down and sanitised after the preparation of raw foods;
 - Always wash your hands thoroughly after handling raw foods;
 - Use separate equipment and utensils for the preparation of raw and ready to eat foods, ensuring all items are cleaned and sanitised between use;
 - Separate complex catering equipment such as mincers, slicers, blenders and vacuum pack machines must be provided and labelled for either raw or ready to eat foods;
 - Provide separate labelled probe thermometers for taking cooking / hot hold temperature checks and other tasks such as delivery and storage temp checks;
 - Designate a raw food preparation sink where possible for washing raw vegetables and fruit, or thoroughly clean and sanitise a shared sink between use.
- The use of colour coded equipment can help to minimise cross contamination, e.g. colour coded knives, chopping boards, cleaning cloths etc.
- Familiarise yourself with any colour code systems, such as for knives & boards, used in your kitchen.



HACCP Stages

Colleague Validation

More Information

- Receipt
- Storage
- Preparation
- Cooking
- Service

1. Can you describe the different types of cross contamination?
2. Give examples of how you would avoid cross contamination during storage?
3. Give examples of how you would avoid cross contamination during food preparation?
4. Can you identify the uses of the different colour coded chopping boards?

More information can be found within the **Good Hygiene Practice Guide No: 4 Cross Contamination** and the HSE website