

# **Food Safety Protocol for WNEP Food Preparation & Demonstrations**

October 2009

**The main objectives of these guidelines are to help WNEP colleagues develop good food handling habits to minimize the risk of food contamination, and so they serve as role models to participants and others in their offices.**

## **PLANNING**

### **Selecting recipes, Resources needed**

- 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 objective for the teaching session.
- For more information about recipes as part of your teaching, visit “How to Select and Use Recipes in Nutrition Education” (available at the following link: <http://www.uwex.edu/ces/wnep/teach/index.cfm>)
- As you review the lesson plan and recipe(s) you are preparing to teach, keep food safety foremost in your mind. What does the facility have in the way of counter space, running water, sinks, electrical outlets for hotplates or crock pots, oven or refrigerator space, accessible restrooms, etc. This may help you decide your food demonstration limitations.
- 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, blowing their nose, etc. An instant hand sanitizer does not substitute for hand washing with soap and water. Remember, your teaching should model best practices! More information about handwashing is available at: <http://www.uwex.edu/ces/wnep/files/washing.pdf>
- Think ahead to the supplies you may need in order to accomplish adequate clean-up during and following the lesson. You can set up a plastic wash basin prior to class with sanitizing solution to use for utensils that get dropped, if you are not in a room with a sink.
- Prepare the dilute bleach sanitizer: 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. A glass jar or plastic spray bottle work well. This solution works well as a rinse for previously washed and rinsed utensils or as a spray for previously cleaned and rinsed countertops, etc. Allow materials to drip-dry or air-dry, no final rinsing needed.

## **TRANSPORTING FOOD & SUPPLIES**

- If you leave your equipment in your car or in the container from a previous lesson, repack your necessary cooking equipment as well as the lesson plan, handouts, and evaluations.
- All equipment should be transported to the site in a plastic container with a tight fitting lid or in a food safe plastic bag to keep equipment clean. If you are not transporting in this manner, the cooking equipment needs to be wiped down with a sanitizer prior to food preparation. Please wash traveling containers each month.
- Foods not requiring refrigeration should be in a separate container with a tight fitting lid.
- Any food items that need to stay cold (40 degrees or below) must be transported 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 degrees.
- **HAVE YOU PACKED YOUR FOOD THERMOMETER?**
- Several sets of utensils are recommended for each lesson, but this can add to the weight you must carry. If a utensil is accidentally dropped on the floor, or you are preparing more than one item or dish, you will need to have clean, sanitized utensils at the ready.
- Use of your personal vehicle causes some additional considerations. 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.

## **SHOPPING FOR FOOD & SUPPLIES**

### **Protocol for handling hot and cold items**

- Make a mental note of what food items will need refrigeration.
- Will you need to bring a cooler with an ice pack?
- Do you have a refrigerator in your office?
- If you will be going directly to the site, how long will your cold items be “out of temperature”?
- Are there adequate facilities for keeping hot food at the proper temperature? Remember, a crock pot should not be used to reheat food, but may be used for hot-holding or cooking.
- If you already have some staple foods from previous lessons, do you need extra plastic bags to portion out smaller quantities?
- When you make up your grocery list, group groceries for easier shopping. Get items that require refrigeration at the end of your shopping.
- **IMPORTANT:** Food used in class demonstrations or samplings must be from a safe source and always handled safely. 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.

## **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! (Already licensed kitchens are ideal.) Some county Extension offices do have a suitable kitchen facility while others do not. If your Extension office has no kitchen facility, are there other kitchens in your county where Extension colleagues could do some food preparation?

- Here are some examples of kitchens to check on:
  - Bank community rooms
  - WIC centers
  - Community Centers
  - Senior Centers
  - Local VFW/Masonic Lodge, etc.
  - Churches
  - Food Banks with licensed kitchens
- If at all possible, try to hold classes at a facility with a licensed kitchen so the food won't have to be transported as well. Your county public health office can help you when considering acceptable food preparation areas:  
<http://dhs.wisconsin.gov/localhealth/index.htm>

## **UPON ARRIVAL AT TEACHING SITE**

Arrive early enough to allow time to prepare surfaces, food, and materials before participants arrive. The following guidelines apply to all workspaces.

*Note: Be sure to notify the person in charge of the kitchen facility if anything in the kitchen is not in proper working order when you arrive.*

- Visitors in the kitchen should be discouraged (pets, and others not essential to the program).
- Smoking should not be allowed anywhere near your food or dish handling area.
- All prep and eating surfaces need to be wiped down with a sanitizing solution. (Use a spray bottle with 1 quart of water mixed with 1 teaspoon of bleach. Let surface air-dry).

## **FOOD DEMONSTRATION**

- Personal appearance and hygiene:
  - Be sure your clothing is clean and appropriate.
  - Remove jewelry.
  - Keep your hair away from the face.
  - Use a clean apron.
- Before you begin be sure to set a good example by washing your hands thoroughly following “[Hand Washing Guidelines for WNEP Teaching](http://www.uwex.edu/ces/wnep/teach/index.cfm)” (available at the following link:  
<http://www.uwex.edu/ces/wnep/teach/index.cfm>)

- Be sure to stop and wash your hands after handling raw food or trash, touching hair, face, or body, eating or drinking, cleaning, etc.  
If you are demonstrating a food item that is not going to be cooked, wear disposable plastic food-handling gloves. 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).
- If you need to prepare foods that have cross-contamination potential, you need to have two separate cutting boards. If you are having several participants cut items that do not really require a cutting board or will not be a cross-contamination hazard, you may use two or three paper plates stacked together for cutting.
- All fruits and vegetables must be washed 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.
- The lids of all cans to be opened must be washed. Cleaning with a paper towel that has been moistened with sanitizing solution is preferable if you do not have a sink with hot water available.
- If you use any potentially allergic ingredients in your demonstration: milk or milk powder, soy-based ingredients (not oils), nuts, peanuts, eggs, fish and seafood; be sure to prepare a small sign alerting learners to these potential allergens. It is not WNEP's role, however, to counsel participants on food allergies.

## **FOOD SAMPLES**

When offering samples or tastes of a food or recipe as part of your lesson, consider carefully how those samples will be handled and served.

- In WNEP foods served as part of a lesson must simply be a taste or small sample—not a “snack” or a serving.
- Use clean utensils and serving containers for the samples offered to participants. Discard any samples that have been offered to participants but not eaten.
- Use disposable utensils and plates for food served to learners. Always offer a napkin or disposable paper towel.

## **CLEAN UP**

Participants may choose to help you with final clean up. All surfaces need to be wiped down. All utensils and equipment used during the lesson must be washed, rinsed and sanitized. Remember to include the can opener as well. Most licensed kitchens have three compartment sinks that make this step easier. IF you DO NOT have a three-compartment sink, bring an extra plastic dishpan for the sanitizing step. If you are using a facility that has NO DISH SINK available, scrape solid food particles from equipment and place equipment in a large trash bag to transport to another location.

- Sanitize all sink compartments PRIOR to washing dishes.
- Remove visible debris from plates, cutting boards, etc.
- Wash in warm soapy water.
- Rinse in hot water.
- 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).
- Air drying in a drain board is the best drying option, but if time does not allow, be sure to use a freshly laundered dish towel or paper towels.
- If you have used a blender for food preparation, remove the bottom blade and gasket by unscrewing the base of the blender. Wash all parts separately. Air dry before re-assembling when possible as it prevents mold from developing on the rubber gasket.
- 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). Bleach should be added to the laundry (and used according to label instructions) if it will not interfere with a septic system.
- Dish rags should not be used.
- All spills of meat, meat juice, or other potentially hazardous foods must be cleaned up with paper towels.

## **STORAGE OF DRY GOODS**

Transfer extra dry goods to clean containers with tight fitting lids. (ie. rice, pasta, sugar, flour). Storage of all containers must be stored off the floor and in a cool location.

## **STORAGE OF PERISHABLE ITEMS**

- Leftover food needs proper attention. Determine if the product has been stored properly.
- Do you have disposable containers for the food?
- If participants are to take food home, do they have proper refrigeration and live close enough to transport safely?
- If there is any question, quietly dispose of leftovers after the participants have left.

*To access additional information pertaining to food safety issues or food borne illness, go to:*

*<http://www.wisc.edu/foodsafety/>*

Adapted with permission, from: "Food Safety Protocol for EFNEP/FSNEP Food Preparation & Demonstration,"  
Montana State University Extension Service (May 2003)