WE are what we eat!

The Department of Environmental Health, Safety and Risk Management Services is pleased to share with you the following guidelines regarding FOOD SAFETY. Let's take it step by step:

1. Buying and Transporting
   - Inspect all food and look for problems such as damaged packages, expiration dates, damaged fruit and vegetables, and meat that has been refrigerated improperly. Do not buy meats that have 'freezer burns' i.e. if it looks "dried out" in any portion of the meat.
   - Do not buy perishable foods too far ahead of the date to be used. Always check for the expiration date, make sure expiration date indicated is at least 3 days after date to be served.
   - Do not keep foods meant to be kept cold or frozen at room temperature for long periods. When buying cold or frozen foods, be sure to refrigerate within 2 hours.

   **DO NOT LEAVE IN VEHICLES IN THE HOT FLORIDA SUN.** If other items are required purchase perishables last.
   - Organize deliveries or bring food to the area when you are there and about to use it, not before.

2. FOOD STORAGE
   - Store food at the appropriate temperatures. Keep cold foods at or below 5 degrees C and hot foods at or above 60 degrees C.
   - Do not over stock the refrigerator. Cool air must circulate to keep food safe.
   - Protect food at all times from contamination, and use suitable containers that are leakproof and have tight fitting lids.
Always stack cooked food and ready to eat food above raw food in the refrigerator in, order to avoid any liquids from raw foods draining onto other foods.

Foods with strong odors should be properly and securely wrapped. Avoid storing such foods for long periods near foods such as milks and creams, which are susceptible to tainting.

Throw out food that shows signs of spoilage (e.g. offensive odor, growth of fungus), **DO NOT** put in the refrigerator it can taint other food.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Recommended refrigeration storage temperatures for some foods</th>
<th>Storage temperature (degrees C)</th>
<th>Shelf life in the home</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Seafood</strong></td>
<td>0-3</td>
<td>3 days</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Meat</strong></td>
<td>0-3</td>
<td>3-5 days</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Minced meat</strong></td>
<td>0-3</td>
<td>2-3 days</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Poultry</strong></td>
<td>0-3</td>
<td>3 days</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Cured meat</strong></td>
<td>0-3</td>
<td>2-3 weeks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Fruit juices</strong></td>
<td>0-7</td>
<td>7-14 days</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Milk</strong></td>
<td>1-7</td>
<td>5-7 days</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Cream</strong></td>
<td>1-7</td>
<td>5 days</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Butter</strong></td>
<td>0-7</td>
<td>8 weeks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Cheese</strong></td>
<td>0-7</td>
<td>Variable (1-3 months)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Margarine</strong></td>
<td>2-7</td>
<td>Variable (6 months)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Oil &amp; Fat</strong></td>
<td>2-7</td>
<td>Variable (6 months)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3. **Food Preparation**

- Keep all food preparation areas, appliances and utensils clean, i.e. wash and wipe with warm soap water before and after use.
- Use separate cutting boards for raw meats. Wash the board with warm soap water after use with raw meats, poultry and seafood.
- Always keep in mind the quantity of food to be prepared, **DO NOT** prepare so much that there will be a lot left out/over for long periods of time or wasted; or which would invite the temptation to re-use it.
- Ensure that all foods, which are served raw, are washed thoroughly.
- Never defrost food at room temperature, thaw it out in the refrigerator, under cold running water or in the microwave. **NEVER REFREEZE THAWED FOOD.**
- Keep cooked foods separate from raw meats.
- Cook and reheat food evenly at temperatures above 60 degrees C.
4. FOOD HANDLING

- Practices of good personal hygiene is essential in ensuring that food is not contaminated with food poisoning or food spoilage bacteria. Some food poisoning bacteria/germs are commonly found on the skin of healthy individuals, therefore scratching the head and face or any body part can result in bacteria being transferred by the hands onto the food. Harmful bacteria can also be transferred from one food type to another, e.g. from raw to cooked food.

- To prevent contamination, every person in the a food handling area, even if not actively handling food, must take care with their own personal hygiene and cleanliness.

- Handwashing is vital in helping to promote wellness and good hygiene, as well as to prevent the spread of disease.

- Hands should be kept as germ free as possible, and should be washed:

  **Before:**
  - Preparing food:
  - Handling food:
  - Eating food:

  **After:**
  - Handling money:
  - Handling raw food:
  - Using the bathroom:
  - Handling soiled or contaminated material e.g. garbage, garbage containers etc.
  - Using a handkerchief or nasal tissue
  - Touching ears, nose, mouth, hair, or other parts of the body
  - Smoking
  - Every break

  **OR** simply whenever doubt exists regarding the need for handwashing.
Handwashing Technique

Step 1: Use warm running water,
Step 2: Use enough soap
Step 3: Use enough friction
Step 4: Rinse well
Step 5: Dry hands thoroughly with disposable paper towel or under air dryer
Step 6: Turn off faucet with paper towel

Injuries and Diseases
Food handlers should not work if they are suffering from gastroenteritis or other related diseases that are likely to be spread through handling food. If food handlers have open cuts or wounds on their hands they must not handle food or food preparation equipment, unless the injury is completely protected by a waterproof bandage, and disposable gloves should be worn over bandages on hands. Coloured bandages should be use so that they are easily seen if they fall off, also disposable gloves and bandages should be changed regularly.

Hair and Jewelry
Long hair should be tied back or covered so that it cannot contaminate the food.
Jewelry should be limited to avoid stones and small pieces of metal falling into food and contaminating the food
Fingernails should be kept short, clean and nail polish free. Gloves should be worn, whenever dealing with unpackaged foods.

Protective clothing
Protective clothing is worn to protect food from the risk of contamination, and to keep clothes clean. Therefore suitable, clean protective clothing should be worn when handling unwrapped food, or when cooking. This includes the use of disposable aprons and gloves.

AT NO TIME IS MONEY AND FOOD TO BE HANDLED BY THE SAME PERSON, WHEN FOODS ARE BEING SOLD.
Keep ALL garnishes such as mayonnaise, salad dressing, mustard and relish on ice **ALWAYS**, such as in a cooler at the service area with ice.

Dispose of any food returned. **DO NOT** re-sell any food that is uncovered or transferred and handled by a customer.

Always make sure that there are enough serving utensils available; **DO NOT** mix the same utensils being used to serve cold and hot foods or any food containing mayonnaise and or salad dressing.

Also ensure that there are enough utensils and paper napkins available for customers’ use.

Consider using paper towels to clean up surfaces. If you do use cloth towels, wash them often in hot soapy water.

Be sure to have garbage disposals available for the disposal of used containers and any other garbage.

All garbage containers **MUST** be kept covered in service area.

**Buffet Services, Picnics, & Other Occasions**

Hot foods should be kept at 140 degrees (F) or warmer. On the buffet table you can keep hot foods hot with chafing dishes, slow cookers, and warming trays. Cold foods should be held at 40 degrees (F) or colder. Keep foods cold by nesting dishes in bowls of ice. Otherwise, use small serving trays and replace them often.

When meals are purchased to eat at a later time, such as a picnic, sporting event, or outdoor buffet, a cooler with ice is the practical alternative to a refrigerator. The cooler should be well insulated and packed with ice or freezer packs. **Remember the 2-hour rule when food is removed from the cooler.**

You can make a BIG difference in ensuring that food you serve is SAFE by taking these simple steps.

Be part of the domino effect..........

ENJOY!

......... Start clean; end clean.

**For More Information:**
Department Environmental Health & Safety & Risk Management (FIU)
305-348-2621

USDA’s Meat and Poultry Hotline
1-800-535-4555

FDA’s Food Information and Seafood Hotline
1-800-332-4010

Partnership for Food Safety Education: Web Site
www.fightbac.org