

Classroom Food Preparation or Taste Testing Food Safety Tips

Nutrition demonstrations and taste tests are opportunities to model and teach children about food safety. Help children stay safe by following the tips below.



- Ask your school nurse and school food service director if any students have allergies or special dietary needs. Plan accordingly.
- Anyone who prepares or handles foods must first wash their hands with soap and warm water for 20 seconds. Hand sanitizer is not adequate for this purpose. Cuts must be covered with a clean bandage and a glove over the bandage. People who are sick should not prepare foods for others.
- If handling foods for others that will not be cooked, hands must be washed, and gloves must be worn or utensils must be used (No bare hand contact with ready-to-eat food).
- Make sure utensils, counters, sinks, cutting boards, dishes, etc. are washed with hot soapy water and sanitized before and after use. Clean spills immediately.
- Some foods require prior preparation in a school kitchen. Fresh produce from packages that are labeled as pre-washed and “ready-to-eat” do not need to be re-washed. All other fresh produce, including those with skins and rinds that are not eaten, must be rinsed under running tap water.
 - Firm-skin fruits and vegetables must be rubbed or scrubbed with a clean vegetable brush under running tap water.
 - Damaged or bruised areas must be removed. Shriveled or slimy produce should be discarded.
 - Removing outer leaves or peeling may decrease pesticides and germs.
 - Read more about produce safety at: <https://theicn.org/icn-resources-a-z/produce-safety/>.
- Food that will be cooked or served hot must be brought to the proper temperature as measured with a clean calibrated food thermometer. See the following resource for proper temperatures: <https://www.fda.gov/food/buy-store-serve-safe-food/safe-food-handling>. School food service may be able to lend and demonstrate use of a food thermometer.
- Foods cooked in the microwave should be covered, stirred, and rotated for even cooking.
- Everyone should wash their hands with soap and warm water before they eat. If soap and warm water are not available, although not ideal, hand sanitizer should be used.
- Make sure students are not touching food that others will eat. If food is not individually wrapped, provide utensils or napkins for students to use to take food, or distribute food with gloved hands. Food that may have been contaminated should not be served. Once food is in the possession of a student, it should not be re-served to another student.
- Do not serve any cut produce or other perishable foods that have been held at room temperature for more than two hours or above 90 degrees for more than one hour. Perishable foods include foods such as dairy products, eggs, meat, fish, poultry, cooked or cut fruits and vegetables, other cooked foods, and desserts with custard or cream.
- Do not serve undercooked meat, poultry, fish, or eggs. Do not serve unpasteurized dairy products, juices, or apple cider. Do not serve raw sprouts.
- Fresh squeezed juice should be consumed right after squeezing and not given to children 9 or below.
- Follow state and local requirements for purchasing, preparing and storing food.
- **Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program (FFVP) schools should also follow food safety practices in the FFVP Handbook.** You can access the FFVP Handbook at: <https://fns-prod.azureedge.net/sites/default/files/resource-files/handbook.pdf>.

For more information about food safety, refer to the Fight BAC website: <https://www.fightbac.org/>.