



CITY OF BETHLEHEM

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BUREAU OF HEALTH

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Guidelines for Providing Safe Food Samples

Many businesses would like to provide samples of their food to customers to entice them to purchase their products. Samples are often provided at events, farmers markets or at grocery stores. This is allowed and can be done, however samples can be easily mishandled and/or contaminated if good food safety techniques are not followed. This document will provide some guidance on supplying safe food samples to your customers. This is not an all inclusive list of potential sampling situations and is intended as guidance only. Samples are regulated under PA Food Code, Chapter 46.

Who can provide samples?

- Farmers' Market, Fair and Festival Vendors-All food vendors at these venues may provide open samples of products they sell **WITH A VALID CITY OF BETHLEHEM TEMPORARY VENDOR PERMIT**. To obtain a temporary vendor permit, contact the City of Bethlehem Recreation Department at 610-865-7081 or email VendorApp@bethlehem-pa.gov.

Food Sampling Guidelines

- All food and beverages must come from inspected approved sources. Vendors must be able to show proof of the approved source. Home-canned and home-prepared foods are not allowed.
- If samples prepared ahead of time, they must be prepared in a licensed kitchen.
- All fruits and vegetables must be rinsed thoroughly in clean water. Should a potable water supply not be available on-site, rinse products to be used for sampling in advance and store in disposable food bags. Melons and tomatoes must be stored at 41°F or below, once cut.

Temperature Control of Foods

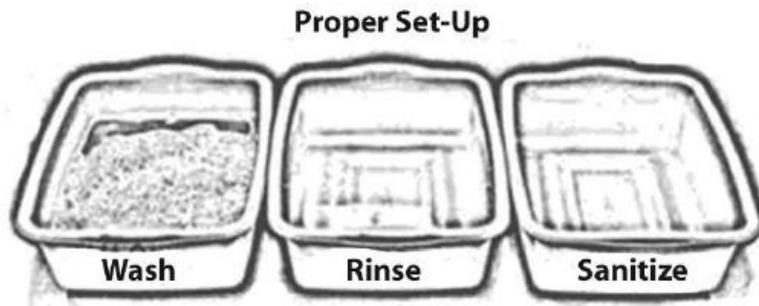
- Temperature Control for Safety (TCS) foods (i.e. meat, poultry, fish, milk, eggs, cut melons, cut tomatoes, etc.) must be maintained at proper temperature to prevent the growth of disease causing organisms.
 - Cold food samples must be maintained at 41°F or below at all times.
 - Hot food samples must be maintained above 135°F.
- Cooked foods must be cooked fully to their required final cook temperature. A thermometer shall be used to verify cook temperatures.
 - **Cooking Temperatures** for Temperature Control for Safety (TCS) foods are: Chicken: 165°F, Ground beef: 155°F, wild game: 165° F. All other raw animal foods: 145°F. Partial cooking of TCS foods is prohibited.

Protection from Contamination:

- Food samples must be protected from contamination at all times. All food samples must be protected from customers and sources of environmental contamination. Sneezes, coughs, guards, lids, covers, wrapping, containers and similar can be used to accomplish this.
- Generally, use toothpicks, wax paper, paper sampling cups, or disposable utensils to distribute samples. Consumer hands should not come in contact with food samples other than their own sample.
- There should be an employee assigned to monitor and watch over samples that are out for consumer self-service. If a consumer contaminates samples, they must be discarded.

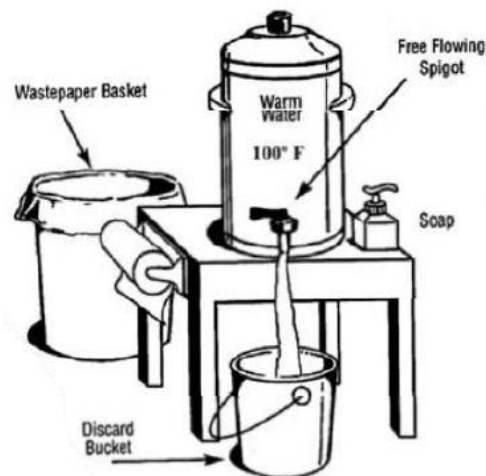
Equipment and Utensils

- Bring several clean, sanitized knives and cutting boards in protective plastic containers or food storage bags, wrapped in plastic wrap, etc.
- Use clean equipment to cut product, taking care to store in-use items so they are protected from contamination.
- Replace soiled knives, cutting boards, etc. with clean items at least every four hours or as the utensils become contaminated.
- Use single service items whenever possible.
- In the location where food samples are prepared or food handling is occurring (cut, diced, placed into cups, and similar) the facility must have access to warewashing. Cutting boards, knives, scoops, bowls and alike must be washed, rinsed and sanitized as required. Equipment may be washed at the end of the day at a licensed food facility.
 - Sanitizers must be used at their proper concentrations. Test strips must be available to test sanitizer strength. Approved sanitizers include quaternary ammonia solutions, chlorine solutions/bleach, or iodine solutions.
 - In some temporary event situations, temporary warewashing stations may be used as shown below:



Personal Hygiene

- **Avoid Bare Hand Contact with Ready-To-Eat Food.** Food employees may not have contact with exposed ready-to-eat food with their bare hands. Suitable utensils, such as deli paper, spatulas, tongs, dispensing equipment, or single-use gloves must be used.
- **Wash Hands Frequently.** Food employees must wash their hands after touching bare human body parts, using the toilet room, handling animals, coughing/sneezing, using a handkerchief, using tobacco, eating/drinking, handling soiled equipment/utensils, when switching between raw and ready-to-eat food, and after engaging in other activities that contaminate the hands.
- **Wash Hands Properly.** Food employees shall clean their hands in a properly equipped handwashing facility by vigorously rubbing together the surfaces of the lathered hands and arms and thoroughly rinsing with clean water.
- **Provide Proper Handwashing Facilities ***Inspectors will check at the event**
 - Handwashing must be convenient and accessible to the food handling area.
 - Bathroom sinks may not be used as food handler handwashing sinks alone.
 - Potable water must be used
 - Soap and paper towels must be provided at the handwash station
 - Glove use and chemically treated towellettes or hand sanitizers **MAY NOT** be used in lieu of handwashing
 - In some temporary event situations, temporary handwashing stations may be used. Examples of temporary handwashing stations are below:



Questions? Contact the Bethlehem Health Bureau at 610-865-7083 .

