

6 things to know about Food Safety



Wash Your Hands

Wash your hands after using the toilet, handling raw meat and poultry, after sneezing or coughing and after touching animals. Wet your hands; then, apply soap. Vigorously scrub hands and arms for at least 10 to 15 seconds. Pay close attention to finger-nails and cuticles. Rinse thoroughly under running water, and dry hands with a paper towel or hand dryer.

Wash Fruits and Vegetables Thoroughly

Purchase produce that is not bruised or damaged. Bag and store fresh fruits and vegetables separately from meat, poultry and seafood products. All produce should be thoroughly washed with water before eating. Fruit with tough skin, such as melons, should be scrubbed with a soft brush and water. Dry produce with a clean cloth towel or a paper towel.

Separate for Safety

Keep fruits and vegetables that will be eaten raw separate from other foods, such as raw meat, poultry or seafood, and from utensils used for those products.

Food Allergies are Common

Each year, millions of Americans have allergic reactions to food. Although most food allergies cause relatively mild and minor symptoms, some can cause severe reactions. The eight most common food allergies that cause 90 percent of all allergic reactions are milk, eggs, fish, wheat, tree nuts, peanuts, soybeans and crustaceans like shrimp, lobster or crab. Common symptoms of a food allergy include, but are not limited to, difficulty breathing and abdominal cramps. If these symptoms occur, call 911 or a local health care provider.

When In Doubt, Throw It Out

Never taste food which you think may be spoiled. If you are uncertain as to whether or not a food is still safe to eat, do not eat it.

Keep Hot Foods Hot and Cold Foods Cold

If a food is cooked and put out to serve, make sure that you keep the food at the right temperature if it is not going to be eaten right away. Perishable food should never be kept at temperatures between 40 F and 140 F for more than two hours. Cold salads, lunchmeats, dairy products and other foods that require refrigeration should always be kept cold (below 40 F).

Crustaceans (shrimp, lobster, crab)

www.deh.enr.state.nc.us/ehs/dfp.htm – www.ncagr.gov/fooddrug/foodsafety/index.htm.

You can also contact the local health department for more information about food safety.

