



Step 25: Serving food

Summary

The 'service' stage of food production provides a number of hazards and safety issues if important controls are not followed.

What could happen?

Team members may think that because as food is so close to being served, that there is no reason to pay close attention to food safety.

This is not true and following controls at this stage is essential.

Procedure

- All food to be served hot must be maintained at or above 63°C, if hot food falls below this temperature it must not be for longer than 2 hours maximum.
- Ready to eat cold food must be maintained below 8°C, if the temperature rises above this it must not be for longer than 2 hours maximum.
- The hands of any team members serving food to the customers must always be clean.
- All food must be rotated with the earliest date displayed at the front to ensure that it is used first. A **'First expired, first out' policy** should be used when selecting food for service.
- **All food on display must be within its 'Use by' date**, or within 'Best before' for best practice.
- Open food, such as fruit or bread, must be discarded if it is contaminated, for example, if it is dropped on the floor.
- If any chilled or frozen food has been left at ambient temperature for an unknown length of time, for example, by a customer, it must be discarded.
- Information provided to consumers (buffets & functions), where food is not served by university personnel, for example the maximum time that a buffet is to be on display.
- Ensure mandatory food allergen information is available via the EPSYs system.
- Ensure all pre-packed and pre-packed for direct sale products are accurately labelled with ingredients and food allergens.
- Conduct a pre service counter briefing.

Step 25: Serving food HACCP Summary

Hazard

- Multiplications of pathogens.
- Cross contamination.
- Contamination with pathogens.
- May Contain allergens

Controls

- Food on display to be covered until required.
- Clean equipment.
- Hot food is to be displayed above 63°C and cold food should be stored below 8°C.
- Buffets delivered as close to service time as possible.
- Information provided to consumers (buffets & functions), where food is not served by university personnel, for example the maximum time that a buffet is to be on display.
- Ensure mandatory food allergen information is available via the EPSYs system.
- Ensure all pre-packed and pre-packed for direct sale products are accurately labelled with ingredients and food allergens.
- Conduct a pre service counter briefing.

Critical limits

- Hot food should be displayed for a maximum 2 hours once it falls below 63°C
- Cold food should be displayed for maximum 2 hours once it is above 8°C

Checks & Records

- Visual observation.
- Cleaning schedule for area.
- Temperature of hot and cold food recorded.
- Temperature of buffets recorded when delivered.

Corrective action

- Reject any hot high-risk food below 63°C for more than 2 hours.
- Reject any cold high-risk food above 8°C for more than 2 hours.
- Remove hot/cold food immediately to alternative storage units operating at correct temperatures if possible.
- Re-clean equipment.
- Reject any contaminated food.
- Re-train team members in procedures.

Other documentation / action

The time and temperature of a buffet at arrival of the location should be recorded. This will ensure that food will be eaten within time limits, whilst it is still safe to eat.

Any food which has been above 8°C for more than 2 hours, or below 63°C for more than 2 hours, should be rejected and not eaten.