

Operating Guidelines for Farmers' Markets

Porcupine Health Unit, Environmental Health, Food Safety

If you are planning to operate a farmers' market in the Porcupine Health Unit area, the following guideline must be followed.

This guideline is divided into three sections:

SECTION 1: MARKET ORGANIZER

SECTION 2: ALL FOOD BOOTHS

SECTION 3: FOOD BOOTHS WITH ON-SITE PREPARATION, SERVICE OR SAMPLING

SECTION 2: ALL FOOD BOOTHS

Food Source:

1. All foods must be obtained from approved sources and/or prepared at an approved food premises.
2. The sale of grade C and/or upgraded eggs is prohibited. Eggs must be graded at an approved egg grading station prior to being offered for sale. Proof of grading must be available. Eggs are to be stored and sold at 4°C or less.
3. The sale of uninspected meat is prohibited. Meat and meat products must be inspected by CFIA or OMAFRA. Proof of grading must be available.
4. For regulations and specifications regarding the sale of other farm fresh foods, such as, but not limited to honey, maple syrup and apple cider, contact the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture Food, and Rural Affairs (OMAFRA) at 1-888-466-2372 (www.omafra.gov.on.ca).
5. All canned/preserved foods (jams, jellies, pickles, etc.) must be packaged in new jars and must be sealed with vacuum lids.

Due to the risk of botulism, the only home canned products allowed for sale at Farmers' Market are jams, jellies and pickles. All home canned food items must be listed on the application form and must be approved by a Public Health Inspector.

Additional requirements regarding home canning (see Appendix A)

6. No food sampling or service unless additional conditions are met (see Section 3).

Labelling:

All home packaged foods must be labelled with the following information:

Source – vendor name and phone number

Common name of food

Ingredients

Date the food was prepared

For more information on labelling requirements, please visit www.inspection.gc.ca and look up "Food Labelling for Industry".

SECTION 2: ALL FOOD BOOTHS (cont'd)

Transportation and Storage:

1. Transport foods quickly from place to place. Use thermal insulated containers with cold/ice packs to maintain cold foods at an internal temperature of 4oC (40oF). Use thermal insulated containers with heat packs to maintain hot foods at an internal temperature of 60oC (140oF).
2. Foods are to be covered during transportation to protect them from dust, dirt, insects and other foreign objects.
3. Food is to be transported and stored in food-grade containers that are not used for any other purpose.
4. Foods must be stored on shelves located at least 15 cm (6") off the floor.
5. Ensure you have a probe thermometer and 70% isopropyl alcohol swabs (that are not expired). The probe thermometer must be wiped down with an alcohol swab before each use.
6. The internal temperature of cold food must be maintained at 4oC (40oF) or lower. Probe thermometers must be used to check food temperatures. High risk foods cannot be left out at room temperature (this includes eggs and meat/meat products that are left sitting on display).
7. Frozen food must be kept frozen solid at -18oC (0oF).
8. Raw foods must be displayed and handled separately from cooked and ready-to-eat foods and produce in order to avoid cross-contamination.
9. Food must be protected from contamination through the use of protective barriers (i.e. plastic wrap, foil, mesh covers, enclosed in cabinets).

Handwashing and Washroom Facilities:

Individual booths that have food preparation or sampling must have a temporary handwashing station within their booth.

Market operators are to provide a central hand washing station equipped with liquid soap in a pump dispenser and paper towel.

Market operators are to provide adequate washroom facilities.

SECTION 2: ALL FOOD BOOTHS (cont'd)

Personal Hygiene:

1. Food handlers are to be clean and wear clean outer garments.
2. Food handlers' hair is to be confined when preparing, handling and serving food.
3. Food handlers are to wash their hands frequently. Wash hands before handling or preparing foods, after using the restroom, sneezing, coughing, blowing the nose or handling money and after any other possible point of contamination (see **Appendix B**).
4. Food handlers must be free from infectious agents that may be spread through food or water.
5. When serving/dispensing food, use tools such as tongs, ladles, lifters and spoons whenever possible. Never serve with your fingers.
6. Do not dip fingers into food or lick fingers for any reason.
7. No double-dipping of utensils when tasting food. Ladle a small amount of food into a dish and taste the food from the dish with a spoon. Do not reuse the spoon.
8. Do not touch hair, face or other parts of the body with your hands and then handle food.
9. Wear non-latex based gloves if you have a cut or burn on your hands. Do not handle food directly while wearing a bandage.
10. Keep fingernails short, clean and never wear nail polish to work.
11. Avoid wearing jewellery and items that could physically contaminate the food.
12. Do not chew gum, smoke or eat while working.
13. Pets must be excluded from home kitchens during the time food is prepared
14. Do not prepare food if you are ill or someone in your household is ill.

SECTION 3: FOOD BOOTHS WITH ON-SITE PREPARATION, SERVICE OR SAMPLING

Food Preparation:

1. Prepare all foods as close to serving time as possible.
2. Never thaw foods at room temperature. See **Appendix C** for safe thawing methods.
3. Use your probe thermometer to verify cooking, cooling, hot holding and cold holding temperatures.
4. Refer to the chart in **Appendix D** to ensure that the minimum internal cooking temperatures are reached.
5. Hot foods must be cooled to 4°C (40°F) within 4 hours. See **Appendix C** for safe cooling practices.
6. Microwaves are to be used only to reheat individual food portions that will be served immediately after reheating.
7. Never reheat leftovers more than once. No second chance for leftovers.
8. Work surfaces for food preparation must be cleaned after each use. Wash work surfaces with hot soapy water, rinse with water, and then sanitize by spraying with a sanitizing solution. Sanitizing solutions may be made with chlorine (bleach), iodine, quats (quaternary ammonium) or any other agent that is non-toxic and sanitizes effectively. See **Appendix E and F**.
9. Provide adequate supply of extra utensils (enough to last the day) stored in a clean container OR wash on-site according to **Appendix E and F**. Change serving utensils every 2 hours, and whenever they become contaminated.
10. Customer samples must be protected from contamination (i.e. individual toothpicks/serving spoons).

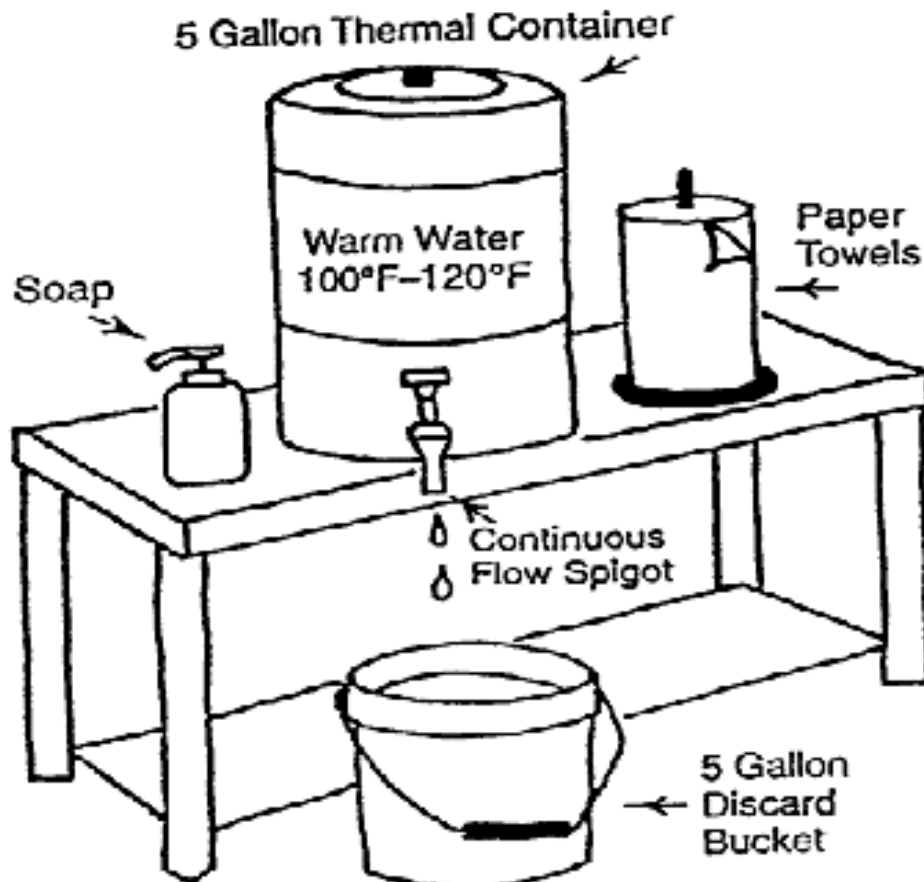
Cleaning and Maintenance:

1. If facilities are available, utensils and equipment used to handle foods are to be washed, rinsed and sanitized on-site.
2. If facilities are not available, utensils and equipment are to be taken to an approved home or other approved food premises for cleaning. Refer to **Appendix E and F** for specific directions regarding dishwashing.
3. Cloths used for cleaning must be stored in a container of sanitizing solution. The solution is to be changed frequently and cloths laundered when they become soiled.
4. All garbage and waste is to be disposed of in containers made of durable, leak proof and non-absorbent material. Garbage is to be removed as often as necessary.

SECTION 3: FOOD BOOTHS WITH ON-SITE PREPARATION, SERVICE OR SAMPLING (cont'd)

Temporary Handwashing Station Setup:

1. Food booths that are preparing, serving, sampling on-site must have a temporary hand wash station set-up. It must be accessible without leaving the vendor's side of the booth but may be shared between booths.
2. Set-up a water jug (equipped with a spigot that allows the water to run free, without having to hold open) and a five-gallon receiving bucket. Fill the water jug with hot water, set it on a chair or on a counter, and then set the bucket directly beneath the spigot.
3. Supply with liquid soap and paper towel.
4. Empty receiving bucket, as needed, into a washroom; NOT onto ground or into the storm sewer.



APPENDIX A – Home Canning Requirements

Botulism is a serious illness that can result from eating improperly prepared canned or bottled foods. Botulism is caused by a bacterium – called *Clostridium botulinum* – that naturally produces toxins as part of its normal life cycle. These bacteria exist worldwide either as spores or vegetative cells. The spores can survive harmlessly in soil and water for many years. When conditions are just right, the spores produce vegetative cells which multiply rapidly and may produce a deadly toxin.

The toxin that causes botulism is colourless, odourless, tasteless and invisible to the naked eye and is not necessarily destroyed by cooking, so preventing the toxin from forming is essential.

Symptoms of botulism range from nausea, vomiting, fatigue, dizziness, headache, double vision and dryness in the throat and nose, to respiratory failure, paralysis and, in some cases, death. The onset of symptoms is generally from 12 to 36 hours after ingesting the toxin. The duration of illness may be 2 hours to 14 days, although some symptoms may linger much longer.

It is estimated that there are approximately 11 million cases of food-related illnesses of all types in Canada every year. Many of these illnesses could be prevented by following proper food handling and preparation techniques. Washing fresh foods reduces the number of these spores slightly. The vital controls are following lab validated recipes when preparing home canned products (From: <http://healthy Canadians.gc.ca/recall-alert-rappel-avis/hc-sc/2013/35219a-eng.php> and “USDA: Complete Guide to Home Canning Guide 1: Principles of Home Canning”).

Due to the risk of botulism, the only home canned products allowed for sale at a Farmers’ Market are jams, jellies and pickles.

These food items are less likely to allow the growth of *Clostridium botulinum* bacteria that causes botulism.

The following must be followed if preparing and selling home canned food items:

- All home canned food items must be approved by a Public Health Inspector before they can be brought to a Farmers’ Market.
- Vendors must follow up-to-date lab validated recipes for home canned items.
- Third party lab testing will be required for home canned items that are not made using a lab validated recipe.
- Only proper sealing jars (i.e. Mason-type) must be used.
- Jars may be refilled only if they are in good condition and cleaned properly (wash jars, lids and screw rings in clean soapy water and rinse well).
- Do not reuse sealing rings and lids. New rings and lids must be used.
- Jams, jellies and pickled vegetables should be processed in boiling water according to the recipe. The seal must be air tight to prevent the entry of spoilage organisms.
- Up-to-date, lab validated recipes must be followed exactly. Do not substitute ingredients or their volume or the jar size indicated in the recipe. This can cause the time or pressure needed during pressure canning or boiling water canning to change. This can lead to bacteria remaining in the food. Always process to the recommended temperature, time and pressure.

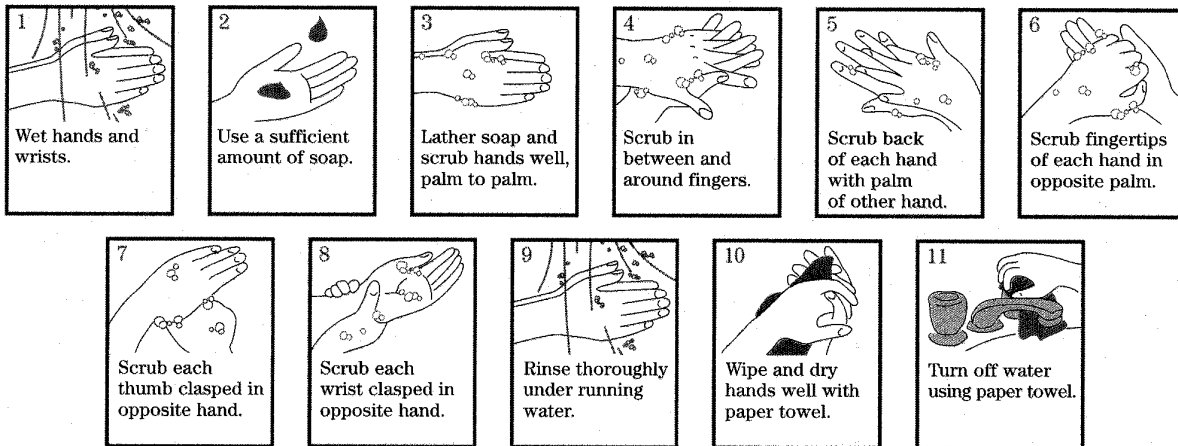
Handwashing

To wash hands properly, rub all parts of the hands and wrists with soap and water or an alcohol-based hand sanitizer. Wash hands for at least 15 seconds or more. Pay special attention to the areas of the hand most frequently missed.

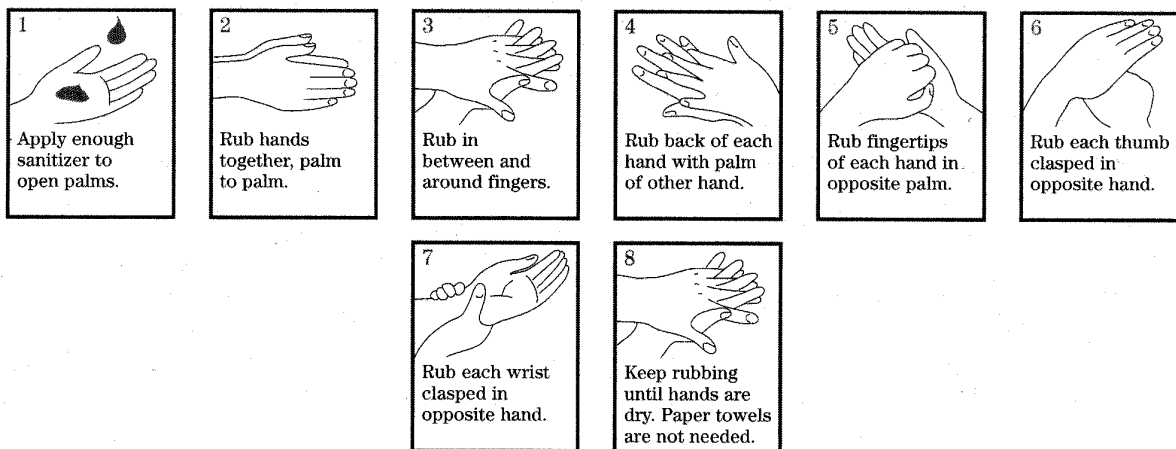
- Keep nails short.
- Avoid wearing rings.
- Avoid artificial nails or nail varnish.
- Remove watches and bracelets.
- Wash wrists and forearms if they are likely to have been contaminated.
- Make sure that sleeves are rolled up and do not get wet during washing.

If you have any questions regarding cuts, sores, allergies or pre-existing skin conditions, call Telehealth Ontario at 1-866-797-0000, TTY 1-866-797-0007.

Handwashing with soap and water



Cleaning with alcohol sanitizers



SAFE THAWING TECHNIQUES

NEVER DEFROST POULTRY, SEAFOOD OR MEATS AT ROOM TEMPERATURE.

Refrigerator Method:

- The safest way to thaw foods is to place them in a refrigerator.
- Place food in its wrapping on a drip-proof tray or plate or in a container.
- Store raw foods on lowest shelves to prevent them from dripping or splashing other foods.
- Allow 6-9 hours per pound (14-20 hours/kg) to defrost.

Cold Water Method:

- Unwrap the frozen meat, poultry, or fish and place in a container.
- Place this container in a clean and sanitized sink under the water tap.
- Pour cold RUNNING water on the food in the container.
- Let the cold water run constantly or add ice to the water (and change this water often) to make sure that the water stays cold.
- Ensure the sink is cleaned and sanitized after thawing is completed.
- Allow 30 minutes per pound (1 hour/kg) to defrost.

Microwave Method:

- Thawing uncooked frozen meat in a microwave is only recommended if the food is to be cooked immediately after thawing.
- Microwave heat is often uneven and the outside portions of foods should be removed as they thaw. This will keep the outside from starting to cook before the inside thaws (refrigerate the removed portions until food is cooked).

SAFE COOLING TECHNIQUES

Hot food must be cooled rapidly to reduce the time it spends in the temperature danger zone between 4°C (40°F) and 60°C (140°F).

NEVER PUT EXTREMELY HOT FOODS IN A REFRIGERATOR. Ensure that foods cool from 60°C (140°F) to 4°C (40°F) within 4 hours.

When cooling large batches or pieces of food:

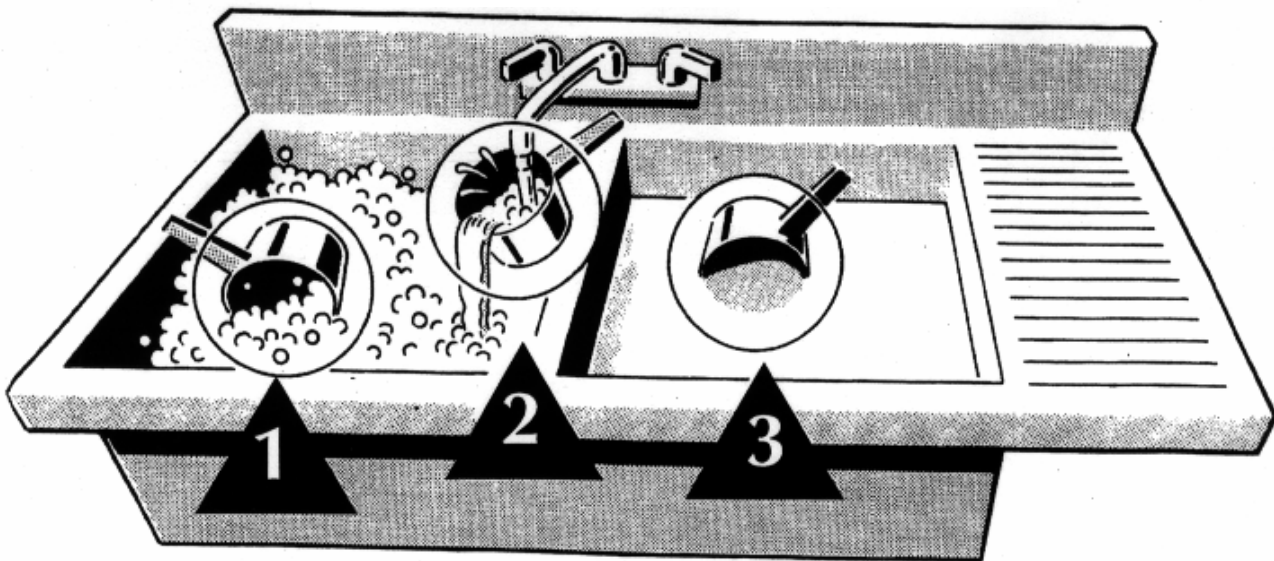
- Break or cut the food up into smaller pieces.
- Divide large batches into several smaller ones.
- Stir the foods as they cool.
- Place food in shallow pans and/or an ice water bath.

**FINAL INTERNAL COOKING TEMPERATURES
(USING A PROBE THERMOMETER)**

Temperatures must be maintained for at least 15 seconds.

FOOD PRODUCT	CELCIUS	FARENHEIT
Poultry		
Whole Poultry	82°	180°
Individual Pieces/Ground	74°	165°
Mixtures		
Containing poultry, egg, meat, fish or other hazardous food	74°	165°
Beef and Veal		
Hamburger, deboned and rolled	71°	160°
Roasts		
Pork All Products	71°	160°
Lamb		
Ground, deboned and rolled	71°	160°
Roasts		
Fish		
All Products	70°	158°
Eggs	63°	145°

Dishwashing-2 Sink Method



1



WASH

- use detergent and warm water

2



RINSE

- under the tap using water hotter than 43°C (110°F)

3

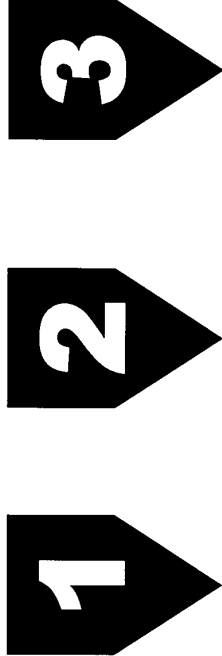


Sanitize

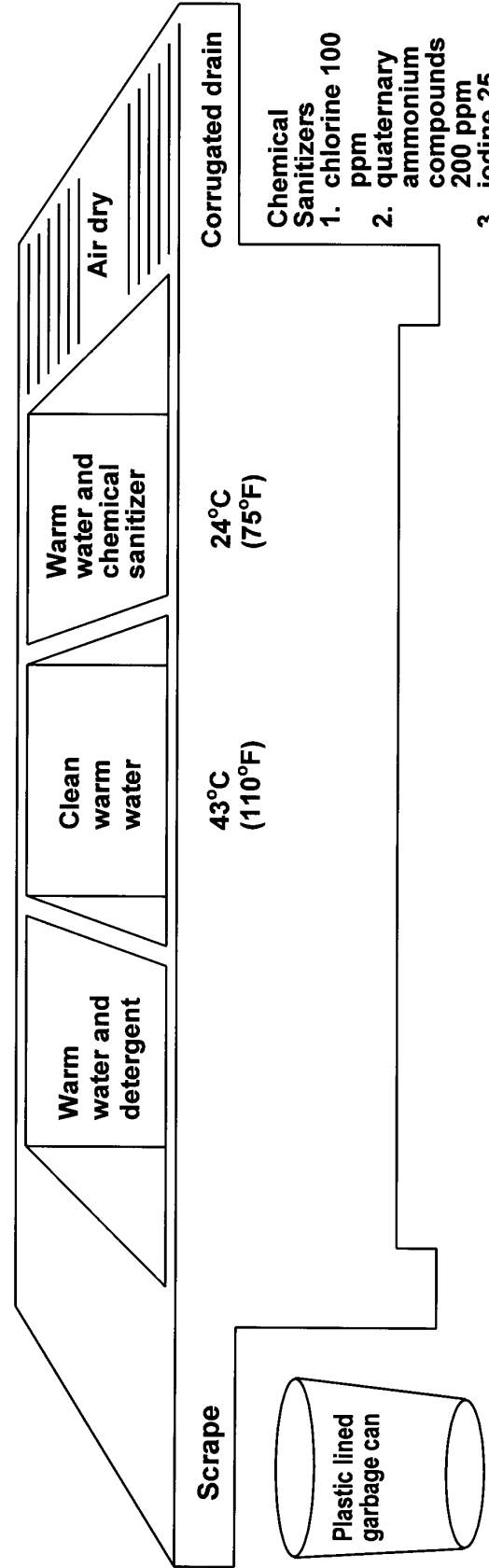
- for 45 seconds in water no colder than 24°C (75°F) with:
 - a) 100 ppm chlorine*
 - b) 200 ppm quaternary ammonia or
 - c) 25 ppm iodine

* 1 ounce of chlorine to 1 gallon of water

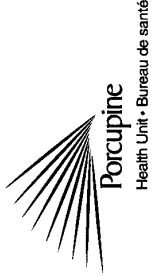
THREE-SINK DISHWASHING METHOD



WASH RINSE SANITIZE



For more information, contact your local health inspector or call 1-800-461-1818.



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FOOD-PIUTE

APPENDIX G – Definitions

Approved source/food premises - the food and/or establishment has been inspected by an official government agency i.e. Porcupine Health Unit.

Cleaning - the physical removal of dirt, soil and grease, typically carried out with soap/detergent, water and a scrubbing action.

Cross-contamination – the transfer of disease-causing micro-organisms to food, i.e. chicken blood dripping onto cold cuts in the refrigerator.

Exempted Farmers' Market– majority of persons operating the stalls are producers of farm products who are primarily selling or offering for sale their own products (51% or more) **note that the *Health Protection and Promotion Act* is still in effect.**

Farm products – products that are grown, raised, or produced on a farm and intended for use as food and include without being restricted to: fruits and vegetables, mushrooms, meat, and meat products, dairy products, honey products, maple products, fish, grains, and seeds and grain and seed products.

Farm – ordinary meaning of farm (rural area with barn, silo, fields, etc and a full-time farmer) and includes a hobby farm (rural area with fields and farmer on a part-time basis) but would not include urban properties with a garden.

Farmers' Market - a food premise and is not considered to be an extension of the farm gate.

Food grade - corrosion-resistant, non-toxic, non-absorbent containers safe for storing food in.

Food premises - any place where food is prepared, sold or served or eaten.

Food Premises Regulation - the provincial regulation that outlines the requirements for a food premises.

High risk food item - any food that is capable of supporting the growth or survival of disease causing micro-organisms or their toxins. Any food that consists in whole or in part of milk or milk products, eggs, meat, poultry, fish, shellfish (edible mollusca and crustacean), or any other ingredients, in a form capable of supporting the growth of infectious and/or toxigenic microorganisms. This does not include foods which have a pH level of 4.6 or below and foods which have a water activity of 0.85 or less.

Internal temperature – internal (inside) temperature of food.

Low risk food item - any food that it is not normally capable of supporting the growth or survival of illness- causing micro-organisms or their toxins.

Micro-organism - very small life forms that may only be seen with a microscope; can be found in soil, dust, water, air, in and on humans and animals (i.e. viruses & bacteria). **Note:** some micro-organisms can cause life threatening diseases i.e. salmonella bacteria in chicken.

Probe thermometer – An instant read thermometer that can be easily inserted into foods to verify cold & hot food preparation and storage temperatures. Available as either a digital or bimetallic stem. Does not include oven or fridge or candy thermometer, or “meat” thermometer that only measures high temperatures.

Pre-packaged food - food that is packaged at an approved food premises other than the premises where it is offered for sale.

Utensil - any article used in the preparation or handling of food.

Sanitize (sanitized, sanitizing) - the reduction in number of disease-causing microorganisms, typically carried out with a chlorine and water solution (1 part chlorine to 10 parts of water).