

The Measures and Conditions between Food Hygiene and Public

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DESCRIPTION

Food hygiene plays an important role in safeguarding public health by preventing foodborne illnesses and ensuring safe food practices from farm to table. Proper food hygiene encompasses a wide range of practices, from personal cleanliness to the safe handling, preparation, and storage of food. This article discovers the complex relationship between food hygiene and public health, highlighting the key aspects of food hygiene, its impact on public health, and best practices to mitigate foodborne risks.

The Importance of food hygiene

Food hygiene refers to the measures and conditions necessary to control hazards and ensure that food is safe for consumption. These measures are designed to prevent contamination by biological, chemical, or physical hazards that could lead to foodborne illnesses. The significance of food hygiene extends to various stages of the food supply chain, including production, processing, distribution, and food preparation.

Biological hazards: Consumers Biological hazards are caused by microorganisms like bacteria, viruses, parasites, and fungi. These pathogens can lead to foodborne illnesses if food is contaminated during production, processing, or preparation. Common bacterial pathogens include *Salmonella*, *Escherichia coli* (*E. coli*), *Listeria*, and *Campylobacter*. They can cause severe illness if ingested in contaminated food. Norovirus and Hepatitis A are examples of viral hazards that can spread through contaminated food or water. Parasites and *Toxoplasma* can infect meat products and other foods. Certain fungi produce mycotoxins, which can contaminate grains and other crops.

Physical hazards: Understanding Physical hazards involve foreign objects that can contaminate food, posing a risk to consumers. Broken glass or metal shards from equipment can enter food products during processing. Improperly maintained equipment or packaging can lead to physical contamination. Natural objects from raw materials can sometimes remain in processed food.

The impact of food hygiene on public health

Food hygiene has a direct impact on public health because improper food handling and inadequate hygiene practices can lead to foodborne illnesses. The World Health Organization (WHO) estimates that nearly 600 million people worldwide contract foodborne illnesses annually, resulting in approximately 420,000 deaths. These illnesses can be caused by bacteria, viruses, parasites, and toxins, and they often lead to symptoms such as diarrhea, vomiting, stomach cramps, and fever. *Salmonella* Often found in poultry, eggs, and raw produce, *Salmonella* can cause severe gastrointestinal symptoms and fever. Certain strains of *E. coli* can produce toxins that lead to serious foodborne illness, with contamination typically arising from undercooked meat and contaminated water. Norovirus known for causing viral gastroenteritis, norovirus spreads easily through contaminated food or surfaces. *Listeria monocytogenes*, this bacterium is found in soft cheeses and deli meats and can be especially dangerous for pregnant women and the elderly. Foodborne illnesses have a significant impact on public health and healthcare systems. In addition to causing illness and death, foodborne diseases lead to considerable economic costs, including medical expenses, lost productivity, and the burden on healthcare infrastructure. By improving food hygiene, these costs can be reduced, enhancing public health outcomes.

Best practices for food hygiene

Personal hygiene: Proper personal hygiene is foundational to food safety. Food handlers should regularly wash their hands with soap and water, especially after using the restroom, handling of raw foods, or touching potentially contaminated surfaces. Wearing clean clothing and hair coverings also helps prevent contamination.

Food handling and preparation: Proper food handling practices are crucial to preventing cross-contamination and ensuring food safety.

Separating raw and cooked foods: Raw meats should be kept separate from other foods to prevent cross-contamination.

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Cooking to safe temperatures: Foods must be cooked to appropriate temperatures to kill harmful pathogens.

Proper storage: Refrigerated foods should be kept at safe temperatures, and leftovers should be promptly stored to prevent spoilage.

Sanitization and cleaning: Regular cleaning and sanitizing of food preparation areas, utensils, and equipment are essential to prevent contamination. This includes disinfecting countertops, cutting boards, and other surfaces that come into contact with food.

CONCLUSION

The relationship between food hygiene and public health is clear for proper food hygiene is important for preventing foodborne

illnesses and ensuring safe food practices. By adhering to best practices in personal hygiene, food handling, sanitization, and education, we can reduce the risk of foodborne illnesses and improve public health outcomes. Food handlers and workers in the food industry should receive training on food hygiene practices to ensure they understand the importance of food safety. Public awareness campaigns can also help educate consumers about safe food handling practices at home. This effort requires collaboration among food industry stakeholders, regulatory agencies, and consumers to create a safer and healthier food system for everyone.