

Ready-To-Eat Foods and Bare Hand Contact Prohibition

Even when food workers wash their hands well, they are not allowed to touch ready-to-eat foods with their bare hands. This is to keep microorganisms that might remain on the hands from getting onto ready-to-eat foods.

Ready-to-eat foods are foods that are served without additional washing or cooking to remove microorganisms.

Ready-to-eat foods include:

- washed produce that is eaten raw such as sliced fruit and salads
- bakery or bread items such as cookies, breads, cakes, and pies
- foods that have already been cooked such as pizza and hamburgers
- foods that will not be cooked such as cheese and snack mixes

Food workers must use utensils such as tongs, scoops, deli papers, or single-use gloves to keep from touching ready-to-eat foods.

For example, tongs may be used to put sliced vegetables into salads and scoops should be used to get ice out of an ice bin. Single-use gloves may be used to prepare foods that need to be handled a lot, such as when making sandwiches, slicing vegetables, or arranging food on a platter. Gloves must be changed often to keep the food safe. **Gloves must be worn if you have sores, bandages, or cuts on your hands and you're working with food.**

Important Rules for Using Gloves:

- wash hands before putting on or changing gloves
- change gloves that get ripped
- change gloves that might be contaminated
- change gloves between working with different foods
- throw gloves away after use
- never wash or reuse gloves

