

# Food Safety, Culturally Appropriate Foods, and Dignity



The Food Bank  
of Western Massachusetts

# Food Safety is Important!

- Food Safety basics
- Color of meat
- Expiration dates
- Should you give it out vs Could you give it out

# Foodborne Illness

- a disease transmitted to people by food

\*\*\*Almost always preventable\*\*\*

- According to the Center for Disease Control:
  - There are 250 different foodborne illnesses
  - 1 in 6 (48 million Americans) get sick every year
  - 128,000 hospitalizations and 3,000 deaths/year
  - Many foodborne illnesses go unreported

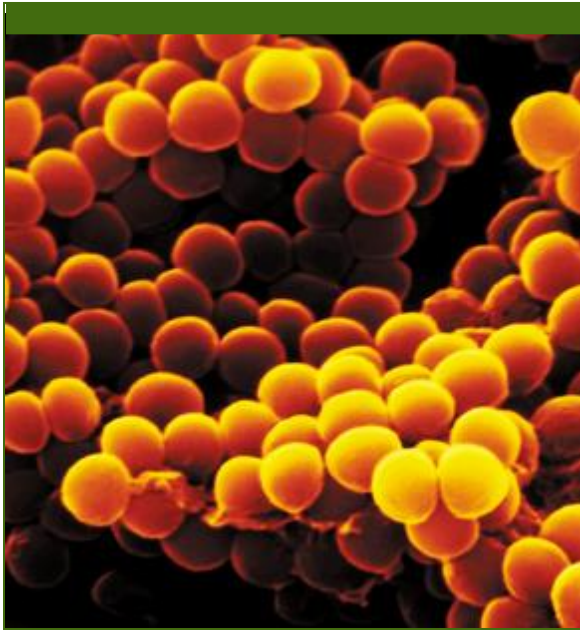
# Foodborne Illness- Who is at Risk?

- At risk:
  - Children
  - Pregnant women
  - Older adults
  - Immunocompromised
- Increase during the summer months

# Signs & Symptoms

- Vomiting
  - Abdominal Cramps
  - Diarrhea
  - Fever
  - Chills
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- Mild to life threatening
- \*\* Report to the health department\*\***

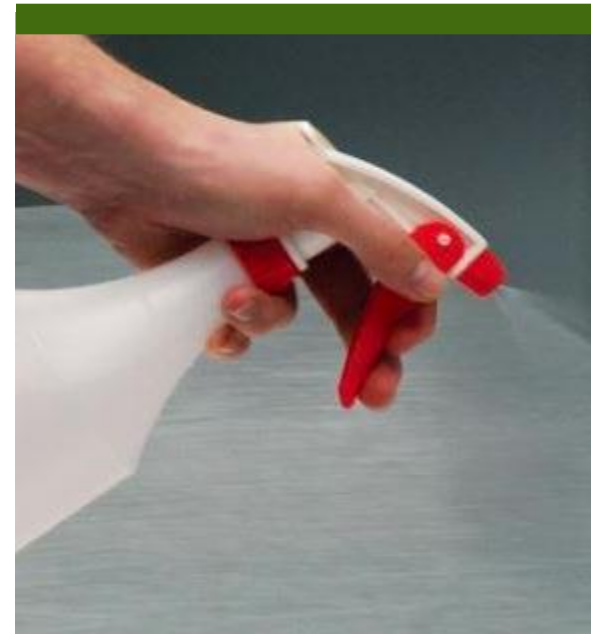
# What makes food unsafe?



Biological



Physical



Chemical

# How food becomes unsafe

- Unsafe products
  - Damaged, leaking, or exposed cans, jars and packages









# How food becomes unsafe

- Cross-contamination
  - Unclean areas, pest infestation
  - Contamination of food by non-food items
  - Raw food dripping on ready to eat food



# Cross Contact

## 8 Big Allergens:

Milk, eggs, soy, fish, tree nuts, peanuts, shellfish, and wheat

- Clean and sanitize surfaces that have come in contact with an allergen.
- Inspect food packaging for leaks or spills that can cause cross-contact.
- Wash hands and change gloves after handling allergens and before handling allergen-free food.

# How food becomes unsafe

- Poor personal hygiene
  - Ready-to-eat handled by soiled hands, by ill person.



# How food becomes unsafe

- Time temperature abuse
  - Potentially hazardous foods not safe at proper temperature
  - Improper thawing, cooking and cooling



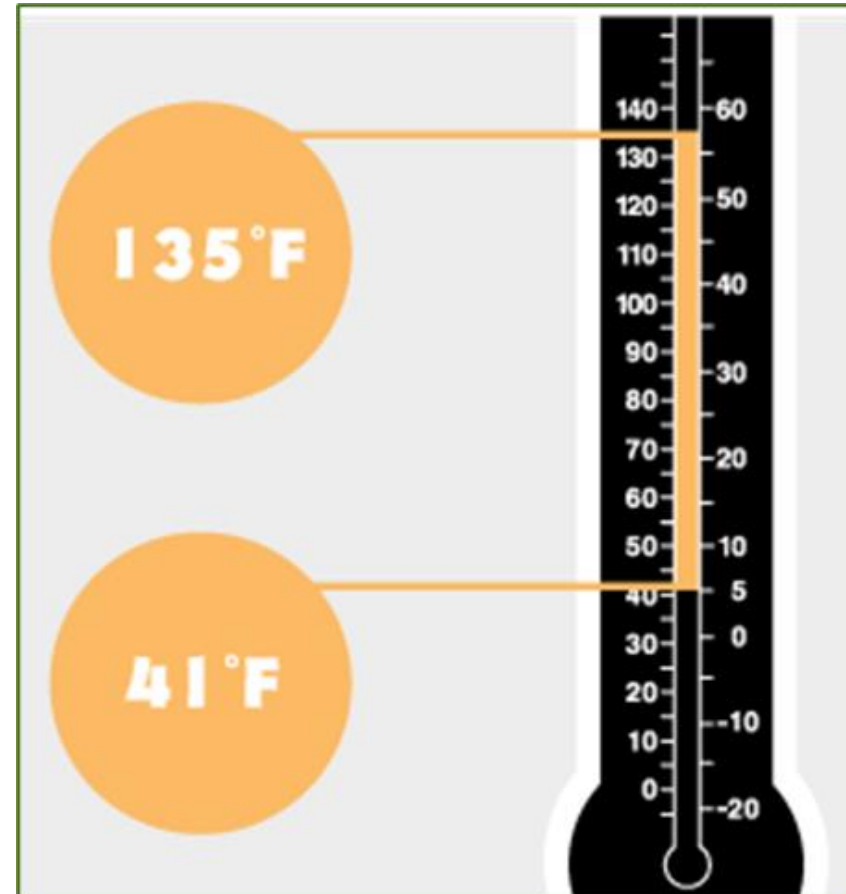


# DANGER ZONE

Pathogens on food can grow in this range and cause a foodborne illness.

Food temperatures must be controlled

- From pick-up from the donor or food bank to handoff to client
- Includes time food spends in the warehouse, on the truck, and at the agency



# Food Quality Dates

- Sell by date
- Packing or Manufacturing date
- Use by or Best by Date
- Expiration “Expires by” or “Do not use after” date

# Sell-By Date

- A quality date
- Tells the store how long to display the product for sale
- The product is still safe to eat past this date



Mostly used for: Milk, cheese, yogurt,  
eggs lunch meat



# Packing or Manufacturing Date

- Used by manufacturers for tracking and recalls
- Not an expiration date

Mostly used for: canned goods, crackers, and spices



# Use By or Best By Date

- This is a quality date.
- It tells clients the date by which the product should be eaten for best flavor or quality.
- The product is still safe to eat past this date.

Mostly used for: canned goods, crackers, and spices



# Expires By or “Do not use after”

- The manufacturer cannot guarantee the nutritional value of the product after this date
- May also say “Use By”

Only for baby food, baby formula, vitamins, and medications

# Expiration Date Resources

- Can look up specific foods on:
  - [FoodSafety.gov](http://FoodSafety.gov)
  - [StillTasty.com](http://StillTasty.com)

# Color of Meat

- Change in color alone does not mean the product is spoiled.
- With spoilage there can be a change in color—often a fading or darkening.
  - the meat or poultry will have an off odor, be sticky or tacky to the touch, or it may be slimy.
  - If meat has developed these characteristics, it should not be used.

# Questions??



# Culturally Appropriate Foods and Dietary Needs

- Feedback on what food they want to see
  - Consulting the diverse group of individuals served
- Medical/Dietary needs
- Cultural preferences



# Developing a Cultural Competence Plan

- Assess your organization's capability to provide culturally appropriate services and access for diverse groups
- Compare the community needs assessment to the organization's capability, then develop a plan to address what the options are.

# Best Practices

- Develop trust with community through open conversations about dietary needs and cultural preferences
- Involve individuals being served in designing and implementing cultural competency plans
- Include diverse volunteers
- Training staff on different dietary needs

# Ways to source specific food needs

- Develop relationship with local restaurants and grocers
  - Reach out to other agencies/organizations to get ideas
- Food Bank can source specific foods with requests
- Grant opportunities to get funds to purchase more expensive items

# Agency Questions

- How do you identify guest needs, cultural preferences, and/or dietary requirements?
- How do you source culturally relevant foods or for different dietary needs?
- What challenges and successes have you faced?