

# HACCP HELP – SEPTEMBER 2025

## Share Tables

A "share table" can reduce the amount of food waste in meal programs and may be used for unopened packaged food and beverage items that students do not consume. Conditions for "share tables" include:

1. Share tables must follow safe food handling procedures. For example, milk should be kept at 41°F or colder. Fruits with an edible peel must be wrapped.
2. Share table items are discarded at the end of their safe food expiration.
3. Students who wish more to eat may take food from the share table to eat on-site.
4. Adults may not take food or beverages from the share table for personal consumption.
5. Share table foods may be returned to appropriate storage and served to students and claimed for reimbursement during another meal; served to students on the share table at a later meal; or donated to charitable institutions, food banks, and government-supported facilities.

For more information, review SOP 23 in the HACCP Food Safety Plan at <https://cnw.ksde.gov>, SNP, Food Service Facts, Ch. 22, HACCP Guidance & Resources.

## Clean & Clutter-Free Food Preparation Areas

Food preparation areas should be regularly evaluated to ensure they are clean and clutter-free. This helps prevent physical contaminants, such as paper clips, pen caps, or bread clips, from gaining access to food. It is also important to check that recipe books, clipboards, and other frequently used resources are clean and free from debris. This can help prevent the risk of cross contamination since these items are touched frequently during food preparation.

## Review & Revise the HACCP Plan

Each site's Hazard Analysis Critical Control Point (HACCP) Food Safety Plan must be reviewed and revised at least annually or as changes occur. The beginning of the school year is a good time to evaluate food safety practices and ensure the plan reflects what is being done in each kitchen. The "Worksheet to Review and Revise the HACCP Food Safety Plan" is an effective tool to use. It is available at <https://cnw.ksde.gov>, SNP, Food Service Facts, Chapter 22, HACCP Guidance & Resources.

## What is Alpha-Gal Syndrome?

Alpha-Gal Syndrome is a type of food allergy. In the United States, the condition is primarily associated with the bite of the Lone Star tick. The bite transfers a sugar molecule called alpha-gal, which is found in most mammals, into the body. In some people, this triggers an immune response that causes allergic reactions to red meats such as beef, pork, or lamb. It can also cause reactions to other foods or products that come from mammals. Each case of alpha-gal syndrome is unique and requires different treatment. Sponsors must work closely with the parent/guardian to ensure the child receives a meal that is safe.

## Service Animals

The Kansas Food Code defines "service animal" as "any dog that is individually trained to do work or perform tasks for the benefit of an individual with a disability, including a physical, sensory, psychiatric, intellectual, or other mental disability." The qualified handler of a service animal could take the animal into areas that are not used for food preparation and that are usually open to the public, such as dining areas, if a health or safety hazard will not result from the presence or activities of the service animal. The production area of the kitchen is not open to the public, so the service animal would not be permitted in the kitchen.

## When Do I Need to Wear Gloves?

Ready-to-eat foods are foods that are already rinsed, prepared, and/or cooked. Examples include cooked chicken nuggets, baked goods, deli meats, and rinsed fresh fruits and vegetables. The Kansas Food Code prohibits bare-hand contact with ready-to-eat foods. This means that utensils, dispensing equipment, deli tissue paper, or single-use food gloves must be used when handling these types of foods.

When using single-use food gloves to handle ready-to-eat foods, hands must first be properly washed. Change gloves after any source of contamination, such as sneezing, coughing, touching a cell phone, or handling cash. Any time there is a change in activities, remove used gloves, wash hands, and put on a new pair to perform the next activity involving the handling of ready-to-eat foods. One of the most common errors made by people who wear single-use food gloves is to leave them on as if they repel all bacteria. A pair of single-use food gloves should only be used for one food handling task at a time.

## Using Local Meats

Meat products used in Child Nutrition Programs must be slaughtered and processed in a Kansas Department of Agriculture (KDA) or United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) inspected facility with an inspector present. Processors must also use correct labeling for meat being used within Child Nutrition Programs. These labeling requirements are the same as to sell at farmers markets or grocery stores; KDA and USDA processors are aware of the correct procedures. However, it is important that sponsors communicate the need for proper labeling when placing their order with the producer. More information on using local meats can be found at <https://cnw.ksde.gov>, Farm to Plate, F2P Guidance.



## HACCP Process Numbers

One part of implementing a Hazard Analysis Critical Control Point (HACCP) Food Safety Plan is to categorize menu items that require time and temperature controls for safety (TCS foods) into a process grouping.

The process grouping for a TCS food is determined by the number of times the food passes through the temperature danger zone of 41°F to 135°F.

- Process 1 foods are TCS foods that are not cooked by the facility. They do not make any complete trips through the temperature danger zone. Process 1 foods are foods that should be received, stored, and served at 41°F or below.
- Process 2 foods are TCS foods that are cooked and served on the same day. They make one trip through the temperature danger zone. They are heated to proper internal temperatures and held at or above 135°F until they are served.
- Process 3 foods are TCS foods that are cooked, cooled, and possibly reheated. They make two or more complete trips through the temperature danger zone and have more opportunities to support the growth of harmful microorganisms.
- Foods that do not require time and temperature controls for safety are grouped as "other" foods. They are not high-risk foods and do not need to be put into a process grouping.

It is important to communicate HACCP process information to others in the operation so they know how to safely handle high risk menu items. This can be done by listing the process number for each menu item on production records, recipes, cycle menus, and/or on the HACCP Process Posters available at <https://cnw.ksde.gov>, SNP, Food Service Facts, Ch. 22, HACCP Guidance & Resources.



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