



“Cooking Safely For a Crowd”

Food Safety Tips and Ideas for the Occasional Quantity Cook Leader’s Guide

It’s scary to think that people might get sick from the food you serve at a large group event, but it can and does happen! Each year, millions of people suffer from foodborne illness. While foodborne illness can be as mild as a stomach ache, it can also be fatal, or can cause long-term disabilities.

You may be a good cook, but cooking for a large crowd is different! Therefore, anyone who plans, prepares, or serves food at a large group event must be aware of and practice safe food handling practices.

Lesson Materials

- Leader’s Guide
- Participant Materials (in order of use)
 - *Planning the Quantity Food Occasion: Menus and Recipes*
 - *Potluck Events*
 - *Danger Zone*
 - *Norovirus*
 - *Service Styles: Risks and Safe Practices*
 - *Table Setting Procedure*
 - *Evaluation*

Learner Outcomes

As a result of this lesson, participants will be able to:

- Recognize factors that can lead to foodborne illness
- Follow proper food handling and food safety practices
- Help volunteers plan, prepare and serve food safely for large groups
- Recognize the impact foodborne illness could have on a food event

Preparing to Facilitate the Lesson

As discussion leader/teacher, your job is to present discussion questions and activities like those suggested in the lesson materials. You are not expected to be the “expert,” but are responsible for leading others in discussion and in encouraging an open, sharing atmosphere.

Before the group meets:

- Review the DVD and the lesson materials.
- Be sure there is a DVD player.
- Have copies of the participant handouts and the evaluation form for each participant.

Suggested Lesson Outline

Introductory Activity

Have participants share a concern or question they have about cooking safely for a large group of people.

Discussion

- Review the lesson objectives with the participants.
- Show the “Cooking Safely For a Crowd” DVD, pausing for discussion when appropriate.
- Discussion questions using the information from the DVD:
 - Can you identify the ways that pathogens (harmful viruses and bacteria) can get into the food you may be serving at your event?
 - Can you find ways to stop the pathogens that might be in the food from growing?
 - How should/would you thaw large amounts of food? For example 20 turkeys for a community dinner or large containers of frozen lasagna.
 - What are the food safety issues with, and how would you send ham sandwiches home after a funeral lunch?
 - What are three practical food safety tips for consumers?

Possible Group Activities Using the Handouts

1. Planning the Quantity Food Occasion: Menus and Recipes
 - a. Considering a large group event familiar to all participants, take turns explaining how each of the categories listed should be handled. Example: Location – consider where the event is held and the decisions that need to be made when selecting a menu for this large group event.
2. Potluck Events
 - a. As discussion leader read one of the situations listed on the handout and ask participants if the event is considered a potluck event or if it requires a license.
3. Norovirus
 - a. Read together, discuss, and share thoughts about how to prevent the spread of Norovirus at any of your food events.
4. Service Styles: Risks and Safe Practices
 - a. Discuss and share ideas on the risks and safe practices of various serving styles
5. Table Setting Procedure
 - a. Have plates, cups, glasses, silverware available for all participants to practice the proper way of handling each to prevent contamination from your hands and fingers.

Summarize

- Identify the main points that participants have learned.
- As a result of learning more about Cooking Safely For a Crowd, discuss what changes, if any, participants plan to make at their large group food events.

Evaluate

Please have participants complete the evaluation form. Return completed forms to:
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DVD run time: 19 minutes

Resources & References

- *Cooking for Crowds, A Volunteer's Guide to Safe Food Handling*, Penn State College of Agricultural Sciences, Pennsylvania, 2003.
- *Cooking for Groups, A Volunteer's Guide to Food Safety*, United States Department of Agriculture, March 2001, revised July 2007.
- *Kitchen Companion Your Safe Food Handbook*, United States Department of Agriculture http://www.fsis.usda.gov/PDF/Kitchen_Companion.pdf
- Minnesota Department of Agriculture website, www.mda.state.mn.us/
- Minnesota Department of Health, Minnesota Food Code, Chapter 4626, Extracted from Minnesota Rules 1998, Minnesota Office of the Revisor of Statutes, 1998.
- Minnesota Department of Health website, www.health.state.mn.us/
- *Occasional Quantity Cooks Trainer's Manual*, Ohio State University Extension, 1994.
- United States Department of Agriculture, Food Safety and Inspection Service website, http://origin-www.fsis.usda.gov/news_&_events/FSIS_Images/index.asp