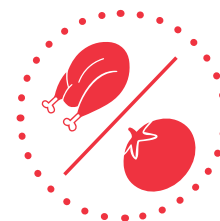


SAFE METHOD:

FOOD STORAGE AND PREPARATION



It is very important to store and prepare food carefully and keep sources of bacteria and allergens away from food preparation areas.

SAFETY POINT	WHY?	HOW DO YOU DO THIS?
Ideally, store raw and ready-to-eat food separately. If they are in the same fridge, store raw meat and poultry, fish and eggs below ready-to-eat food, such as salads, sandwiches and desserts. Unwashed fruit and vegetables should also be kept separate from ready-to-eat food and above raw meat. If you are defrosting raw meat or poultry, make sure that none of the liquid that comes out of it gets onto other food. Cover cooked and other ready-to-eat food. Keep food that contains allergens separate from other food.	This helps to prevent harmful bacteria spreading from raw food to ready-to-eat food.  This will stop allergens from spreading.	Do you store raw meat and poultry? Yes No If yes, do you follow this advice? Yes If not, what do you do?
Never use the same worktop, chopping board, knives or other equipment for preparing and storing raw food (such as meat, poultry, fish and unwashed vegetables, salad and fruit) and for ready-to-eat food, unless they have been thoroughly cleaned and disinfected in between. See the 'Cleaning' safe method.	Harmful bacteria from raw food such as meat / poultry can spread from chopping boards and knives to other food. 	Do you always use a clean and disinfected knife and chopping board for preparing ready-to-eat food? Yes If not, what do you do? More information on control of cross contamination can be found on the FSA website. Prepare raw foods at different times to ready to eat foods. Where possible prepare ready-to-eat food before raw food.
Do not wash raw meat or poultry.	Washing meat and poultry does not kill bacteria but it can splash harmful bacteria around the kitchen, contaminating sinks, taps, surfaces and ready-to-eat food.	More information can be found at the FSA website.
When preparing fruit, vegetables and salad ingredients wash them thoroughly by rubbing vigorously in a colander or container under running water. Clean and disinfect the sink beforehand. Wash the cleanest ones first.	Fruit, vegetables and salad ingredients may have harmful bacteria on the outside. Washing will help clean them and remove some of the bacteria.	

'USE BY' AND 'BEST BEFORE' DATES – WHAT THEY MEAN

'Use by' date – this is about safety. Do not use or serve food after this date – this is against the law. Even if it looks and smells fine, eating food after its 'use by' date could make children or babies ill.

'Best before' date – this is about quality. Food should be safe to eat after the 'best before' date, but it might begin to lose its flavour and texture. Eggs are an exception – they should always be used by their 'best before' date. More information at [Best before and use-by dates guidance](#).

