

# PERSONAL HYGIENE FOR FOOD HANDLERS

## Germ Farm



Under Food Safety Standard 3.2.2 - Food Safety Practices and General Requirements, food handlers have an overall responsibility for doing whatever is reasonable to make sure that they do not make food unsafe or unsuitable for people to eat. Food handlers also have specific responsibilities related to their health and hygiene.

### Are you a food handler?

A food handler is anyone who works in a food business and who either handles food or surfaces that are likely to be contact with food such as cutlery, plates and bowls. A food handler may do many different things for a food business. Examples include making, cooking, preparing, serving, packing, displaying and storing food. Food handlers can also be involved in manufacturing, producing, collecting, extracting, processing, transporting, delivering, thawing or preserving food.

### What about personal hygiene?

A food handler's personal hygiene practices and cleanliness must minimise the risk of food contamination. The most important things they need to know are that they must:

- Do whatever is reasonable to prevent their body, anything from their body or anything they are wearing, coming into contact with food or food contact surfaces;
- Do whatever is reasonable to stop unnecessary contact with ready-to-eat food;
- Wear clean outer clothing, depending on the type of work they do;
- Make sure bandages or dressings on any exposed parts of the body are covered with a waterproof covering;
- Not eat over unprotected food or surfaces likely to come in contact with food;
- Not sneeze, blow or cough over unprotected food or surfaces likely to come in contact with food;
- Not spit, smoke or use tobacco or similar preparations where food is handled.

### Hand washing

Food handlers are expected to wash their hands whenever their hands are likely to contaminate food. This includes washing their hands:

- Immediately before working with ready-to-eat food after handling raw food;
- Immediately after using the toilet;
- After touching their hair, scalp, mouth or nose;

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- Before they start handling food or go back to handling food after other work;
- Immediately after smoking, coughing, sneezing, using a handkerchief or disposable tissue, eating or drinking.

### How should food handlers wash their hands?

1. Use the hand washing facilities provided by the business.
2. Wet hands then clean thoroughly using soap. Lather the soap for 20 seconds, making sure to wash backs of hands, wrists, between fingers and under fingernails.
3. Use warm running water to rinse off soap.
4. Dry hands thoroughly on a single use towel or in another way that is not likely to transfer disease-causing organisms onto the hands.
5. Turn off taps using paper towel so that hands are not re-contaminated.

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START →



1. Wet hands



2. Soap (20 seconds)

## HAND WASHING STEPS



6. Turn off taps with towel



3. Scrub backs of hands, wrists, between fingers, under fingernails.



5. Towel dry



4. Rinse