

HANDLING LEFTOVER FOODS

Most businesses will have some food leftover from time to time. These foods can be used provided they are handled safely to decrease the potential for harmful organisms to grow.

The following tips are essential to minimizing any food safety risks:



- Wash your hands before and after handling leftovers.
- Clean and sanitise all utensils and food contact surfaces.
- Cool leftovers quickly by dividing into small portions using shallow containers. Alternatively frequent stirring hastens the cooling process.
- Cover food and place in refrigerator or cool room. Meat and other foods should be transferred to refrigeration once steam stops escaping. Ensure good air circulation around containers.
- Once cooled, foods can be put in freezer if required.
- Date leftovers to ensure that food is not stored for too long. As a guide generally 4-5 days is the maximum holding time.
- Don't mix leftover foods with fresh foods.

Reheating

Keep food out of the temperature danger zone (5-60°C) to minimize the potential for bacterial growth and carry out the following important measures to minimize any safety risk:

- Reheat to an internal temperature of 75°C
- Use a probe thermometer to check the internal food temperature particularly with rolled or seasoned meats.
- Ensure that food is cooked thoroughly.
- Remember cooking does not necessarily kill all bacteria and some bacteria may have previously been present and will resist the cooking process.
- Use the microwave where appropriate following the manufacturer's instructions.
- If leftovers remain uneaten after reheating, throw them away.

When in doubt throw it out!

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Council's Environmental Health Officers can be contacted between the hours of 8.30am and 5.00pm Monday to Friday.

