

Development of the Session

Food Contact Surface Cleaning

STAGE 1: What is Surface Cleaning?

Q. What type of surfaces do we have in a typical food environment that will require cleaning?

Possible answers identified, may have to probe to get more answers or explain if the required answers are not forthcoming from the learners:

- Work Surfaces
- Preparation Tables
- Chopping Boards
- Window Ledges/Chairs
- Storage Shelves/Racking

Although there are a number of surfaces within a food environment we are concentrating on the cleaning of **food contact surfaces** only in this session. These are surfaces that come into contact with food.

Q. When we clean something what are we trying to remove?

- Dirt, grease and food debris

Cleaning is defined as:

“The process of making something free from dirt and grease.”

Any questions so far?

STAGE 2: The Aims of Cleaning Food Contact Surfaces

Before we can understand the aims of cleaning food contact surfaces we have to understand how food becomes unsafe and therefore harmful to health.

Explain

As a food handler we have a legal responsibility to ensure that food does not become contaminated. Contaminated food could be harmful to health because it contains something that should not be there.

Q. What examples are there of something harmful in food that should not be there?

Examples from the group might include:

- Glass
- Fragments
- Jewellery
- Hair
- Chemicals
- Bacteria
- Plasters

These are called contaminants and they fall into three categories:

- Physical (glass, parts of machinery)
- Chemical (cleaning chemicals, pesticides)
- Biological (bacteria, viruses, fungi)

Contaminants get into food one of two ways:

- Directly (touching or falling on to the food)
- Indirectly (via a vehicle such as chopping boards, work surfaces, preparation tables, cloths, hands, knives)

Biological contamination very often occurs indirectly and two vehicles that can contribute to biological contamination are **work surfaces** and the **cloths** that are used to clean them.

Q. How might a cloth cause biological contamination?

A **cloth** is used to wipe a chopping board that has been used to cut raw meat. If the same cloth is then used to wipe a plate on which to serve sandwiches, the cloth has moved the bacteria from the chopping board on to the plate.

So when we clean a food contact surface we are trying to:

- Remove dirt, grease and food debris
- Protect food from biological contamination
- Reduce opportunities for bacteria to multiply by removing food and moisture
- Prevent food from physical contamination

To achieve our aim there is a golden rule of cleaning.

Q. What is the golden rule of cleaning?

- “Clean as you go!”

Q. What does this actually mean?

- Clearing away, cleaning and disinfecting immediately after each task.

Not all surfaces require disinfection but food contact surfaces always do.

Q. What is the purpose of disinfection?

- It reduces the bacteria to a safe level using a chemical.

Q. Any questions?

STAGE 3: Food Contact Surface Cleaning Method

Let's have a look at the surface we are going to clean.

Trainer to organise a dirty food contact surface (ensure dirt and grease on the surface) such as preparation table, chopping board to show method

Trainer to ask questions whilst showing learners the method

Explain

Q. What can you see on the surface?

- Dirt, grease and food debris (chicken bones, egg shells, soil, oil)

Q. So what is the first step in the cleaning process?

- To remove any loose dirt, debris and grease from the surface

Q. What do you require to remove the loose debris?

- Cloth
- Refuse bin

Q. What is the next step?

- Wash the surface

Q. What do you require to wash away the dirt and grease?

- Hot water
- Detergent
- Cloth

Q. What do we need to remove now?

- Rinse off the detergent as this is a chemical contaminant, using hot water and a clean cloth

Q. How safe is this surface to put food on?

- Not very as harmful bacteria may still be on the surface

Q. What do we need to do now to reduce the bacteria to a safe level?

- Disinfect

Q. How do we do this?

- Apply chemical to the surface and leave for the time indicated on the container's label, usually around one minute

Q. What do you apply the chemical with?

- A clean cloth or a fresh piece of paper wiper*

Paper wipers are available in blue roll, centrefeed roll and pre-cut sheet formats.

Q. What is the next step?

- Rinse with clean water to remove the chemical



Trainer to stress this point

Q. What is the final step?

- Dry the surface

Q. What is important to remember when drying the surface?

- Not to re-contaminate the surface by using a dirty cloth
- Use a fresh piece of absorbent paper wiper

As we can see **cloths and paper wipers** are a very important tool in the cleaning process, however if not used correctly they can re-introduce bacteria at any stage of the process causing cross contamination.

Any questions?

STAGE 4: Using Cloths During the Cleaning Process

As mentioned earlier, cleaning food contact surfaces aims to reduce physical, biological and chemical contamination.

Surfaces and reusable cloths are vehicles which can potentially move bacteria from one place to another, causing food to become contaminated.

Q. What is the best wiping material to use to prevent cross contamination when cleaning and disinfecting?

- Reusable cloth or single use disposable wipers for cleaning with detergent
- Single use disposable paper wipers for disinfecting and drying surfaces

Let's now consider what types of materials are available for surface cleaning and explore how they help to reduce cross contamination of food contact surfaces.

Explain

Trainer to demonstrate pulling out a paper wiper and allow learners to feel it

Re-visit the cleaning and disinfecting process and discuss the paper wiper during the stages

When cleaning food contact surfaces, reusable cloths are intended for removing surface debris and initial cleaning with detergent. Reusable cloths must only be used for their designated purpose on food preparation surfaces and must be disinfected daily.

Single use disposable paper wipers must be used for disinfecting and drying to avoid cross contamination.

Q. What elements of the cleaning process is this suitable for?

- This is a disposable wiper suitable for all stages, but essential for disinfecting and drying food contact surfaces

Q. What are the benefits of using a paper wiper?

- One use and disposable, prevents the wiper being used again and again thus becoming a vehicle that may contaminate food contact surfaces during cleaning
- Suitable for light surface cleaning with all-purpose cleaners and disinfectants
- Suitable for drying surfaces as it's absorbent
- Good absorbency means you only require a small amount to complete the job. No need to use large amounts

Q. Why do we use blue coloured paper in food preparation?

- If it does get into food it is easily identifiable

Q. What is the benefit of only needing to use a small amount of paper wiper to complete the cleaning task?

- Less used, therefore less waste produced and less need for food handlers to deal with refuse
- It's better for the environment to produce less waste

As you can feel the paper wiper is strong and robust enough for single use.

Q. How will this prevent contamination during the cleaning process?

- As it is strong and absorbent it is less likely to tear or break up when wet and therefore will not become a physical contaminant

We must ensure that paper wipers used for disinfecting do not become contaminated by food, chemicals or water before use.

Q. How do we protect unused paper wipers from contamination?

- Use a dispenser mounted on a convenient vertical surface

Trainer observe learners practising with the paper wipers.

Allow learners to practice pulling out wipers

Colour-Coded Cloths

Colour-coded cloths are another type of cloth suitable for surface cleaning. These can be disinfected for repeat use, so are therefore longer lasting.

Allow learners to feel cloths during discussion

The cloths are suitable for use during surface and deep cleaning and are versatile as they can be used for wet and dry applications such as polishing.

Explain

Trainer to distribute cloths to learners to feel and discuss

Explain

Q. How does the cloth feel?

- Soft, absorbent, strong, very durable

Q. What are the benefits of these features?

- Low linting and strong cloth ensures physical contamination from fluff and fibres is reduced during surface cleaning
- Reduced consumption and costs
- Different colour cloths can be used for different cleaning tasks

Q. What is the purpose of the colours?

- Colour coding helps to reduce the risk of cross contamination by designating one colour for a particular task or food type

Q. What should we do with these cloths between surface cleaning tasks?

- Disinfect to reduce the risk of bacterial multiplication and contamination

Surface Cleaning Wet Wipes Handy Bucket

There are now some convenient wiping products available that come with the cloth already impregnated with cleaning chemical.

Allow learners to practise pulling out wipes and handling

Q. When can this type of product be used within the cleaning process?

- For general surface cleaning and for cleaning food contact surfaces prior to disinfecting and drying

Explain

Trainer to introduce Handy Bucket and demonstrate pulling out of wipes

Q. What are the benefits of this product during surface cleaning?

- The combination of the wiper material and the cleaning chemical is very efficient
- The solution and wipe combination is convenient, ready to use, saves time and is cost effective
- The bucket style container is convenient to carry round

Q. What is the benefit of the silicone closure?

- Enables single-wipe dispensing every time
- Prevents the wipes drying out in the open air
- Prevents the wipes from becoming contaminated

Q. Why is that important?

- No over usage therefore more cost effective, less waste, less waste handling and better for the environment
- Prevents cross contamination

Q. Any questions?