



BARE HAND CONTACT WITH READY-TO-EAT FOODS

These foods can easily become contaminated prior to service to consumers by a food worker's hands as a result of poor hand washing or by an ill employee that should not be handling RTE foods in a food service operation. Ready-to-eat (RTE) foods are foods that do not require or receive further preparation, cooking, or washing prior to being consumed by people. Examples of RTE foods include: cooked foods, sliced raw fruits and vegetables, sandwiches, salads, toppings, lunch meat and cheeses, bakery products, sugar, spices, and seasonings.

Strict hand washing practices are absolutely critical in all food operations. After proper hand washing, use the following items to minimize bare hand contact when handling ready-to-eat food to prevent cross contamination:

- Deli Tissues
- Spatulas
- Tongs
- Forks
- Dispensing Equipment
- Single-Use Gloves

In addition, ill food employees must be restricted from working with foods or even excluded from food operations depending on the population served, type of illness, and symptoms. Check with local health or regulatory authorities for guidance to determine how to respond to employee illness.