



Wyoming  
DEPARTMENT OF *Agriculture*

## FOOD SAFETY ON BUFFETS

Buffets are an effective way to serve a large number of people at one time. When buffet equipment is working properly and are adequately monitored they offer individuals variety of safe food options. However, buffets pose their own unique challenges to food safety. Ensuring that your operation is offering safe food options is essential! When working with buffets and self-service options follow these food safety guidelines.

1. All employees must wash hands prior to handling food on the buffet.
2. All foods must be held at the proper temperature and cooked to the proper temperature before being placed on the buffet.
3. All TCS (time and temperature control for safety) foods must be kept at the proper temperatures. 135°F or hotter for all hot held foods and 41°F for all cold held foods.
4. Monitor temperatures frequently using a calibrated thermometer. It is recommended to log temperatures.
5. If ice is used to keep foods cold, it must be made from potable water and handled in a manner to prevent contamination. Melted ice must drain away from food. Containers of food must be completely surrounded by ice. Food must never be placed directly on ice, but placed on a clean serving platter.
6. Ice must never be reused once it has been used to cool foods.
7. Food dispensing utensils such as spoons or tongs must be available for each container at a self-service unit.
8. All foods on a buffet, salad bar or other self-service line must be protected from contamination by means of covers, food guards, shields or other effective means.
9. Foods must be placed in food grade containers.
10. Do not add new food to containers. Instead remove the old container and replenish with a fresh supply in a clean container.
11. Ensure that plenty of clean plates and utensils are available, clear soiled plates from tables to ensure that patrons are using clean plates each time they visit the buffet.
12. Signage notifying the patrons that new plates and utensils should be used on the buffet should be available.
13. It is suggested to have signage available labeling the food product available to limit confusion by patrons.