



## UC ANR ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH AND SAFETY

Clover Safe notes are intended primarily for 4-H volunteers and members nine years and older.

### #100 FOOD SAFETY: CORE FOUR FIGHT BAC PRACTICES

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), foodborne illnesses cause approximately 48 million illnesses, 126,000 hospitalizations, and 3,000 deaths annually in the U.S. Food handling during 4-H activities can introduce the risk of transmitting foodborne illnesses. However, this risk can be greatly reduced by following the "Core Four Fight Bac" food safety practices.



#### 1. Clean – Be Smart, Keep Foods Apart:

- **Wash your hands** with soap and warm water for at least 20 seconds. Dry with a clean cloth or disposable paper towels.
- **Clean surfaces** using a sanitizing solution made from 1 tablespoon of unscented liquid chlorine bleach mixed with 1 gallon of water. Allow surfaces to air-dry or use clean paper towels.
- **Rinse fresh produce** under running water before eating or preparing. Avoid using soap or bleach on produce. Dry with a clean cloth or paper towels.

#### 2. Separate – Don't Cross-Contaminate:

- **Keep raw meats** (meat, poultry, seafood, eggs) separate from other foods. Store these items on the bottom shelf of the refrigerator or on a plate to avoid drips.
- **Use separate cutting boards, plates, and utensils** for raw meats and other foods to avoid cross-contamination.
- **Safely marinate** foods: Boil any sauce used for marinating raw meats before applying it to cooked food.
- **Use clean ice** for serving food and beverages to avoid contamination.

#### 3. Cook – Heat to Safe Temperatures:

- **Use a food thermometer** to ensure foods reach safe internal temperatures—don't rely on color alone.
- **Microwave foods** until they reach safe temperatures all the way through.
- **Cook eggs thoroughly** until both the yolk and white are firm.

#### 4. Chill – Refrigerate Promptly:

- **Keep refrigerators at 40°F or below.** Clean them regularly with hot water and liquid soap, then dry with a clean cloth or paper towels.
- **Refrigerate or freeze perishable foods** within 2 hours (1 hour if the temperature is 90°F or higher) to prevent bacterial growth.
- **Thaw foods safely** in the refrigerator, in cold water (if cooking immediately), or in the microwave. Never thaw food at room temperature.

By following these "Core Four Fight Bac" practices, 4-H participants can help reduce the risk of foodborne illness during activities involving food handling and preparation.