



HURRICANE PREPAREDNESS VOLUNTEERS IN FOOD PREPARATION

It is human nature to assist those in need, especially after a hurricane where persons are displaced and have lost their homes, loved ones and a sense of security. Following is a list of food safety rules and hygienic practices one should follow when preparing food or volunteering to assist in its preparation:

1. Present documentation of an up-to-date food handler's certificate;
2. Obtain approval from the coordinating agency, i.e., The Bahamas National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA) to provide food service assistance;
3. Use protective wear when handling food to reduce cross contamination such as:
 - a. Wearing a face mask or guard;
 - b. Wearing a clean apron;
 - c. Wearing hair nets, beard guards and keeping long hair tied back and in a bun;
 - d. Wearing gloves, especially if the fingernails are long and have nail polish on them;
 - e. Wearing closed-in shoes to protect the feet from spills; or
 - f. Wearing disposable shoe covers
4. Remove all jewelry except for a solid wedding band before handling food;
5. Washing of hands before and after the handling of food with liquid soap and warm water then drying with a disposable hand towel; do not use a reusable towel;
6. Clean and sanitize food preparation surfaces and equipment before handling food;
7. Always keep food covered when not in direct contact to prevent the entry of foreign objects;
8. Use bottled water for cooking, not tap water;
9. Store food at the correct temperature (40F or less); place a thermometer in the refrigerator and check regularly;
10. Wash fruits and vegetables before use with a 3:1 ratio of water to vinegar using a spray bottle or wash thoroughly with potable water;
11. Refrain from touching unclean parts of the body (nose, hair, arm pits, eyes, etc.);
12. Keep food preparation area and floor free from debris and spills;
13. Use separate utensils when preparing raw meats or raw, ready to eat foods (vegetables or fruits);
14. Keep cooked foods separate from raw (meats) and raw, ready to eat foods;
15. Cook foods thoroughly; use a thermometer to verify the temperature; (165F)
16. Reheat foods properly; use a thermometer to verify the temperature (165F);
17. Keep pot handles away from the front of the stove when cooking;
18. Once food is cooled (within 2 hrs.), refrigerate immediately;
19. Do not use rusted, dented or bulging canned goods; open and discard the contents;
20. Do not use food which has passed its expiration/use by date; open and discard the contents;
21. Use oven mitts when taking hot dishes from the oven or microwave (change from time to time);
22. Wash and sanitize kitchen surfaces, equipment and eating utensils at the end of each day.



BAHFSA
THE BAHAMAS AGRICULTURAL HEALTH & FOOD
SAFETY AUTHORITY