

# Glossary

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**Note:** The number(s) in bold at the end of each entry refers to the chapter in which the term is discussed in detail.

## A

**Abrasive cleaners.** Cleaners containing a scouring agent used to scrub off hard-to-remove dirt. They may scratch some surfaces. **12**

**Active managerial control.** Food safety management system designed to prevent foodborne illness by addressing the five most common risk factors identified by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). **10**

**Air curtains.** Devices installed above or alongside doors that blow a steady stream of air across an entryway, creating an air shield around open doors. Insects avoid them. Also called air doors or fly fans. **13**

**Air gap.** Air space used to separate a water-supply outlet from any potentially contaminated source. The air space between the floor drain and the drainpipe of a sink is an example. An air gap is the only completely reliable method for preventing backflow. **11**

**Approved suppliers.** Suppliers that have been inspected, are able to provide an inspection report, and that meet applicable local, state, and federal laws. **6**

## B

**Backflow.** Unwanted reverse flow of contaminants through a cross-connection into a drinkable water system. It occurs when the pressure in the drinkable water supply drops below the pressure of the contaminated supply. **11**

**Bacteria.** Single-celled, living microorganisms that can spoil food and cause foodborne illness. Bacteria present in food can quickly multiply to dangerous levels when food is incorrectly cooked, held, or reheated. Some form spores that can survive freezing and very high temperatures. **2**

**Bimetallic stemmed thermometer.** The most common and versatile type of thermometer, measuring temperature through a metal probe with a sensor in the end. Most can measure temperatures from 0°F to 220°F (–18°C to 104°C) and are accurate to within ±2°F or ±1°C. They are easily calibrated. **5**

**Boiling-point method.** Method of calibrating a thermometer based on the boiling point of water. **5**

**Booster heater.** Water heater attached to hot-water lines leading to dishwashing machines or sinks. Raises water to temperature required for heat sanitizing of tableware and utensils. **11**

## C

**Calibration.** Process of ensuring that a thermometer gives accurate readings by adjusting it to a known standard, such as the freezing point or boiling point of water. **5**

**Carriers.** People who carry pathogens and infect others, yet never get sick themselves. **4**

**Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).** Agencies of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services that investigate foodborne-illness outbreaks, study the causes and control of disease, publish statistical data, and conduct the Vessel Sanitation Program. **14**

**Cleaning.** Process of removing food and other types of dirt from a surface, such as a countertop or plate. **12**

**Concentration.** The amount of sanitizer to water measured in parts per million (ppm). The concentration of sanitizer affects the effectiveness of the sanitizer solution. **12**

**Contamination.** Presence of harmful substances in food. Some food safety hazards occur naturally, while others are introduced by humans or the environment. **1**

**Coving.** Curved, sealed edge placed between the floor and wall to eliminate sharp corners or gaps that would be impossible to clean. Coving also eliminates hiding places for pests and prevents moisture from deteriorating walls. **11**

**Critical control points (CCPs).** In a HACCP system, the points in the process where you can intervene to prevent, eliminate, or reduce identified hazards to safe levels. **10**

**Cross-connection.** Physical link through which contaminants from drains, sewers, or other wastewater sources can enter a drinkable water supply. A hose connected to a faucet and submerged in a mop bucket is an example. **11**

**Cross-contact.** The transfer of an allergen from a food containing an allergen to a food that does not contain the allergen. **3**

**Cross-contamination.** Occurs when microorganisms are transferred from one food or surface to another. **1**

## D

**Date marking.** A date on ready-to-eat TCS food held for more than 24 hours indicating by when the food must be sold, eaten, or thrown out. **7**

**Degreasers.** Alkaline detergents, often called degreasers, that contain a grease-dissolving agent. **12**

**Delimers.** Used on mineral deposits and other soils that alkaline cleaners cannot remove, such as scale, rust, and tarnish. **12**

**Detergents.** Cleaners designed to penetrate and soften dirt to help remove it from a surface. **12**

## F

**FAT TOM.** Acronym for the conditions needed by most foodborne microorganisms to grow: food, acidity, temperature, time, oxygen, moisture. **2**

**FDA Model Food Code.** Science-based reference for retail food operations on how to prevent foodborne illness. These recommendations are issued by the FDA to assist state health departments in developing regulations for a foodservice inspection program. **14**

**Finger cots.** Protective coverings used to cover a correctly bandaged cut or wound on the finger. **4**

**First-in, first-out (FIFO).** Method of stock rotation in which products are shelved based on their use-by or expiration dates, so oldest products are used first. **7**

**Flow of food.** Path food takes through an operation, from purchasing and receiving through storing, preparing, cooking, holding, cooling, reheating, and serving. **5**

**Food allergen.** A naturally-occurring protein in food or in an ingredient that some people are sensitive to. If enough of an allergen is eaten, an allergic reaction can occur. **3**

**Food and Drug Administration (FDA).** Federal agency that issues the *FDA Model Food Code*, working jointly with the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). The FDA also inspects foodservice operations that cross state borders—interstate operations such as food manufacturers and processors, and planes and trains—because they overlap the jurisdictions of two or more states. **14**

**Food codes.** State level food safety regulations that are written and adopted. **14**

**Food defense.** Program developed and implemented by an operation to prevent deliberate contamination of its food. **3**

**Food safety management system.** Group of programs, procedures, and measures designed to prevent foodborne illness by actively controlling risks and hazards throughout the flow of food. **10**

**Foodborne illness.** Illness carried or transmitted to people by food. **1**

**Foodborne-illness outbreak.** An incident in which two or more people experience the same illness symptoms after eating the same food. An investigation is conducted by the state and local regulatory authorities, and the outbreak is confirmed by a laboratory analysis. **1**

**Fungi.** Ranging in size from microscopic, single-celled organisms to very large, multicellular organisms. Fungi most often cause food to spoil. Molds, yeasts, and mushrooms are examples. **2**

## H

**HACCP.** Food safety management system based on the idea that if significant biological, chemical, or physical hazards are identified at specific points within a product's flow through the operation, they can be prevented, eliminated, or reduced to safe levels. **10**

**HACCP plan.** Written document based on HACCP principles describing procedures a particular operation will follow to ensure the safety of food served. See HACCP. **10**

**Hair restraint.** Device used to keep a food handler's hair away from food and to keep the individual from touching it. **4**

**Hand antiseptics.** Liquids or gels used to lower the number of microorganisms on the skin's surface. Hand antiseptics should only be used after correct handwashing, not in place of it. Only those hand antiseptics that are compliant with the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) should be used. **4**

**Health inspectors.** City, county, or state staff members who conduct foodservice inspections. Health inspectors are also known as sanitarians, health officials, and environmental health specialists. They are generally trained in food safety, sanitation, and public health principles. **14**

**High-risk populations.** People susceptible to foodborne illness due to the effects of age or health on their immune systems, including infants and preschool-age children, pregnant women, older people, people taking certain medications, and those with certain diseases or weakened immune systems. **1**

## I

**Ice-point method.** Method of calibrating thermometers based on the freezing point of water. **5**

**Imminent health hazard.** A significant threat or danger to health that requires immediate correction or closure to prevent injury. **10**

**Immune system.** The body's defense system against illness. People with compromised immune systems are more susceptible to foodborne illness. **1**

**Infestation.** Situation that exists when pests overrun or inhabit an operation in large numbers. **13**

**Inspection stamp.** A stamp indicating carcasses and packages of meat have been inspected by the USDA or a state department of agriculture. **6**

**Integrated pest management (IPM).** Program using prevention measures to keep pests from entering an operation and control measures to eliminate any pests that do get inside. **13**

## K

**Key drop delivery.** The receipt of food by a foodservice operation after-hours while closed for business. **6**

## M

**Material Safety Data Sheet (MSDS).** Sheets supplied by the chemical manufacturer listing the chemical and its common names, its potential physical and health hazards, information about using and handling it safely, and other important information. OSHA requires employers to store these sheets so they are accessible to staff. **12**

**Microorganisms.** Small, living organisms that can be seen only with the aid of a microscope. There are four types of microorganisms that can contaminate food and cause foodborne illness: bacteria, viruses, parasites, and fungi. **2**

**Minimum internal temperature.** The required minimum temperature the internal portion of food must reach to sufficiently reduce the number of microorganisms that might be present. This temperature is specific to the type of food being cooked. Food must reach and hold its required internal temperature for a specified amount of time. **8**

**Mobile units.** Portable foodservice operations, ranging from concession vans to full field kitchens, capable of preparing and cooking elaborate meals. **9**

**Mold.** Type of fungus that causes food spoilage. Some molds produce toxins that can cause foodborne illness. **2**

## N

**NSF.** Organization that develops and publishes standards for sanitary equipment design. It also assesses and certifies that equipment has met these standards. Restaurant and foodservice managers should look for an NSF International Mark (or UL EPH product mark) on commercial foodservice equipment. **11**

## O

**Off-site service.** Service of food to someplace other than where it is prepared or cooked, including catering and vending. **9**

## P

**Parasite.** Organism that needs to live in a host organism to survive. Parasites can be found in water and inside many animals, such as cows, chickens, pigs, and fish. Correct cooking and freezing will kill parasites. Avoiding cross-contamination and practicing correct handwashing can also prevent illness. **2**

**Pathogens.** Illness-causing microorganisms. **2**

**Pest control operator (PCO).** Licensed professional who uses safe, current methods to prevent and control pests. **13**

**Pesticides.** Chemicals used to control pests, usually insects. **13**

**Porosity.** Extent to which water and other liquids are absorbed by a substance. Term usually used in relation to flooring material. **11**

**Public Health Service (PHS).** A federal agency that conducts research into the causes of foodborne illness and assists with the investigation of outbreaks. **14**

## R

**Ready-to-eat food.** Any food that is edible without further preparation, washing, or cooking. It includes washed fruit and vegetables, both whole and cut; deli meats; and bakery items. Sugars, spices, seasonings, and correctly cooked food items are also considered ready to eat. **1**

### Reduced-oxygen packaged (ROP).

Packaging method that reduces the amount of oxygen available in order to slow microbial growth. ROP methods include *sous vide*, MAP, and vacuum packaging. **7**

**Resiliency.** Ability of a surface to react to a shock without breaking or cracking, usually used in relation to a flooring material. **11**

## S

**Sanitizing.** Process of reducing the number of microorganisms on a clean surface to safe levels. **12**

### Shellstock identification tags.

Each container of live, molluscan shellfish received must have an ID tag that must remain attached to the container until all the shellfish have been used. Tags are to be kept on file for 90 days from the date recorded on the tag. **6**

**Slacking.** Process of gradually thawing frozen food in preparation for deep-frying. **8**

**Sneeze guards.** Food shields placed over self-service displays and food bars that extend seven inches beyond the food and fourteen inches above the food counter. **9**

**Spore.** Form that some bacteria can take to protect themselves when nutrients are not available. Spores are commonly found in dirt and can contaminate food grown there. A spore can resist heat, allowing it to survive cooking temperatures. Spores can also revert back to a form capable of growth. This can occur when food is not held at the correct temperature or cooled or reheated correctly. **2**

## T

**TCS food.** Food that contains moisture and protein and has a neutral or slightly acidic pH. Such food requires time-temperature control to prevent the growth of microorganisms and the production of toxins. **1**

### Temperature danger zone.

The temperature range between 41°F and 135°F (5°C to 57°C), within which most foodborne microorganisms rapidly grow. **2**

**Temporary units.** Operations operating in one location for no more than 14 consecutive days in conjunction with a special event or celebration. Usually serve prepackaged food or food requiring only limited preparation. **9**

**Thermistors.** Thermometers that check food temperature through a sensor on the tip of a metal probe. **5**

**Thermocouples.** Thermometers that check food temperature through a sensor on the tip of a metal probe. **5**

### Time-temperature abuse.

Food has been time-temperature abused any time it has been allowed to remain too long at a temperature favorable to the growth of foodborne microorganisms. **1**

### Time-temperature indicator (TTI).

Time and temperature monitoring device attached to a food shipment to determine if the product's temperature has exceeded safe limits during shipment or subsequent storage. **5**

**Toxins.** Poisons produced by pathogens, plants, or animals. Some occur in animals as a result of their diet. **2**

**Training need.** Gap between what staff are required to know to do their jobs and what they actually know. There are several ways to identify food safety training needs, including observing job performance, testing food safety knowledge, and surveying staff to identify areas of weakness. **15**

**Water hardness.** The amount of minerals in water. Water hardness affects how well a sanitizer works. **12**

## Y

**Yeast.** Type of fungus that causes food spoilage. **2**

## U

**U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA).** Federal agency responsible for the inspection and quality grading of meat, meat products, poultry, dairy products, eggs and egg products, and fruit and vegetables shipped across state lines. **14**

## V

**Variance.** Document issued by a regulatory agency that allows a requirement to be waived or modified. **10**

**Virus.** Smallest of the microbial food contaminants. Viruses rely on a living host to reproduce. They usually contaminate food through a food handler's incorrect personal hygiene. Some survive freezing and cooking temperatures. **2**

## W

**Water activity ( $a_w$ ).** Amount of moisture available in food for microorganisms to grow. It is measured in a scale from 0.0 to 1.0, with water having a water activity ( $a_w$ ) of 1.0. TCS food typically has a water-activity value of 0.85 or higher. **2**