

Fact Sheet

Cleaning and Sanitising – Mechanical Equipment

Effectively cleaning and sanitising mechanical equipment used to prepare food is critical for food safety. Cleaning and sanitising food contact equipment is required by the law (The *Food Act 2001* and the Australia New Zealand Food Standards Code) and all food businesses must comply with the law.

What do you mean by mechanical equipment?

Mechanical equipment examples include stab mixers, food processors, blenders, vitamisers, slicers and other similar devices.

Why is it important to clean and sanitise mechanical equipment?

Sometimes, mechanical equipment can look clean on the outside but may be dirty on the inside. Mechanical action may draw food and bacteria into the inside areas of equipment where bacteria can grow, multiply and then contaminate the next food that is prepared with the equipment.

So it is important that all equipment can be dismantled enough for it to be thoroughly cleaned and sanitised.

If harmful bacteria are present, they may cause foodborne illness. The risk is higher when the equipment is used for preparing both raw food (e.g. eggs and meat) and cooked food (e.g. soup)/ready to eat food (e.g. cream).

How can I effectively clean and sanitise mechanical equipment?

- > Mechanical equipment should be cleaned and sanitised as soon as possible after you use it so that food does not dry onto surfaces. The longer you wait, the more difficult it is to remove!
- > Remember it is just as important to clean and sanitise the inside areas of mechanical equipment. Make sure that mechanical equipment can be dismantled sufficiently.
- > Commercial dishwashers are good to clean and sanitise mechanical equipment parts.
- > For manual cleaning, all parts of the equipment should be washed in warm water and detergent using a small scrubbing brush to clean every surface.
- > Don't forget to also sanitise using a food grade sanitiser after manual cleaning. Some sanitisers must be rinsed off after time for it to work (see manufacturer's instructions).

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What other important things should I think about?

- > Know your equipment; you will need to be able to show your local council environmental health officer that it can be effectively cleaned and sanitised.
- > Regular maintenance of equipment is essential so that deteriorated parts can be replaced (e.g. seals) and to ensure that non-food contact areas are not a source of contamination.
- > Always refer to the manufacturer's instructions or if not available, contact a service technician to help you create instructions.
- > It is safest to use separate mechanical equipment for raw food and cooked/ready to eat food.

Steps on how to clean and sanitise can be found at;

www.sahealth.sa.gov.au/foodstandards

For more information

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