

ENGLAND &
WALES **BEST
PRACTICE
GUIDES**

Basic Hygiene.

Meat Hygiene





Introduction

The aim of this guide is to highlight the risks associated with food hygiene and the steps needed to minimise them.

This guide links to the following guides in this series: Gralloching, Carcass inspection and Larder hygiene and safety.

Hazards

There are 3 categories of food hygiene hazard, Biological, Chemical and Physical. Some examples of these are below:

- Biological – Harmful bacteria, Diseases, Parasites
- Chemical – Cleaning products, commonly used chemicals such as fuels and oils, veterinary administered medicines
- Physical – Vegetation, soil, hair, rust, bone fragments, bullet fragments

All of the above can contaminate a carcass and cause harm if said carcass enters them human food chain.



Controls

The procedures for handling carcasses are dealt with in the Gralloching, Carcass Inspection, and Larder guides but there are a number of aspects of basic hygiene practice designed to prevent contamination known as “controls” which are outlined in the table below.

Basic actions to reduce food hygiene hazards	
When working with food:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain a high degree of personal hygiene • Wear clean clothes or protective garments • Do not touch your face or hair • Do not cough or sneeze over food products • Do not wear jewellery or other items which may become soiled or fall into food • Do not eat, drink, or smoke
Wash hands to prevent contamination:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Before starting work • Frequently during work to avoid soiling carcass • After touching raw food especially meats • After going to the toilet • After a break or leaving the larder • Change gloves frequently if they become dirty
Prevent contamination from cuts, scrapes and other skin issues:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Covering cuts with blue food safe dressings and/or wearing gloves Seeking medical advice if unsure
When suffering from any diarrhoea, food poisoning, vomiting or other illness:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do not handle carcasses or work in the larder or food preparation area • Anyone suffering from these symptoms should not return to work until 24 hours after the symptoms have stopped
Before beginning work in the larder:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Put on a washable apron and /or change into clean clothes and clean footwear
Prevent cross contamination by:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minimising contact with anything not essential to the food process. • Keeping work areas properly cleaned • Cleaning tools(especially knives and saws), other equipment and transport containers thoroughly between carcasses • Use only single use, disposable wipes

- Bacteria can cause illness by being ingested with food then reproducing in the body or by poisoning food as they grow on it.
- As few as 10 (E.coli) bacteria can cause illness in a healthy adult.
- Bacteria need time, moisture, food, and warmth to multiply.
- In 100 minutes 1000 bacteria can become 1 million.
- Bacteria behave differently at different temperatures, so proper temperature control is vital to minimise bacterial risk:
 - -18°C to -20°C bacteria dormant.
 - +1°C to +7°C bacteria grow slowly.
 - +8°C to + 63°C (optimum 37°C) DANGER ZONE bacteria can multiply rapidly.
 - + 63°C and above, bacterial numbers reduce.
 - +100°C bacteria mostly destroyed.
- Sources of bacteria include: The environment, non-potable water, carcasses, raw food, all animals and their hair, droppings/urine, stomach contents, fly blow, dirty surfaces and equipment.



Cleaning

- Cleaning procedures can be split into 7 stages.
- Stages 1-5 should be followed in order for the cleaning of floors and walls and equipment such as hooks and gambrels.
- Work surfaces, knives and saws should be cleaned using 1-3 then either 6 or 7.

Stage	Method
1 - Pre-clean	Use a brush and cold water to remove any debris present
2 - Main clean	Use hot water (75-82°C) and a detergent to remove any remaining visible contamination such as grease from all surfaces
3 - Rinse	Use hot water to remove any detergent and loosened contamination
4 - Disinfect	Use a chemical disinfectant to kill bacteria
5 - Rinse	Use hot water to remove disinfectant and bacteria
6 - Sanitise	Use sanitiser on hard surfaces such as work surfaces and equipment to kill bacteria
7 - Sterilise	Use of hot water or UV light to sterilise knives and saws

Storage

- Carcasses and meat products must be kept in cool, well ventilated conditions to prevent or slow the growth of bacteria and mould.
- The ideal temperature range to store “in-skin” carcasses is between 0 and 7°C, where processed meat should be kept between 0 and 4°C.
- The concept of a “cold chain” should be followed with all carcasses or processed venison. Once cooled to below 7°C should not be allowed to rise above that temperature again (see Larder Design guide).

Notes

- Wipes – use only disposable dry wipes (e.g. blue coloured paper roll) on carcasses and wipe once only per sheet.
- Proprietary wet (e.g. probe wipes) wipes can be used on surfaces or equipment.
- Water – washes away some contamination but can spread it, do not attempt to wash away contamination on carcasses. Avoid splashing carcasses when cleaning. Water must be of potable (drinkable) quality.
- All products should be approved for food use.
- Always follow manufacturers instructions and wear appropriate PPE when applicable.
- Training is available on all manner of food safety and hygiene matters.



Further Information

- **Food Standards Agency guidance on food hygiene**

www.food.gov.uk/food-hygiene

- **Training**

[www.food.gov.uk/business-guidance/
online-food-safety-training](http://www.food.gov.uk/business-guidance/online-food-safety-training)