

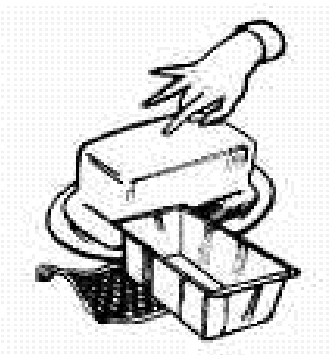
Non-Bare Hand Contact with Ready-to-Eat Foods

Wisconsin Food Code Fact Sheet #3

Cross contamination to hands from unclean surfaces is one of the leading contributing causes of the spread of pathogenic organisms that lead to human illnesses. The avoidance of direct hand contact with foods that will be immediately consumed is one way to protect the food from contamination.

Creating a clean barrier to the food is what this requirement is all about!

The food establishment operator has choices: either eliminate bare hand contact entirely with ready-to-eat foods, or establish written and practiced procedures for appropriate hand-washing activities. These procedures must be detailed and specific to the tasks performed. They will be approved and verified by state or local regulatory staff during inspections. Required changes in procedure or entirely different methods may



have to be implemented if your staff fails to follow your hand washing procedures or observed cross contamination occurs.

A Ready-To-Eat (RTE) food is a food that is edible without washing, cooking, or additional preparation by the food handler and is reasonably expected to be consumed in that form.

Other means of handling Ready-to-eat foods include:

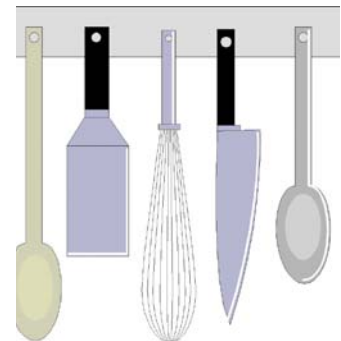
- Deli paper
- Tongs
- Spatula
- Single-use gloves
- Other utensil

The operator must have *approved* written alternative practices and procedures, if bare hand contact cannot be avoided.

The operator should work with their inspector to determine suitable procedures for their processes. Procedure guidelines can be obtained from the inspector.

Do not forget proper hand-washing.

Hand-washing must be practiced in addition to utensil and glove use.



Do not replace hand-washing with use of a hand sanitizer. Hand sanitizers are not

intended to replace soap in the hand-washing process. The Wisconsin Food Code does not require the use of hand sanitizers.