

Food Taste Testing - Five Steps for Safety

Lesson Description:

This lesson explains the importance of using food-safe taste testing to assure quality standards are met for customers. A practice-based activity is used to demonstrate the two-spoon method for food-safe taste testing. The lesson is designed for managers to teach school nutrition assistants/technicians.

Materials needed -

- Two disposable spoons
- Small cup or bowl
- Sample food for tasting if appropriate

Lesson Objectives:

At the end of this lesson, the participant will be able to:

1. Identify why proper taste testing is important to food safety.
2. Describe and/or Demonstrate how to properly taste food during preparation.

STEP 1 - Take a sample of the food from the pan using the sampling spoon.

Use two spoons, a sampling and a tasting spoon. Using the sampling spoon, take a small amount of food from the container. To prevent contamination, never taste directly from a sampling spoon or any utensil used in preparation or service.

STEP 2 - Turn or step away from the container of food.

Turn away from the pan or take a step back prior to transferring the food from the sampling spoon to the tasting spoon. This is an important step. Standing away from the pan of food being sampled prevents contamination during the transfer or tasting. When standing over or near the pan of food, contamination will occur if the spoon drips into the product.

STEP 3 - Transfer the food from the sampling spoon to the tasting spoon or to a small plate or bowl.

This step can be tricky because the food is poured or dropped from the sampling spoon to the tasting spoon. The two spoons may never touch one another. This step is most easily done with the smallest adequate sample. Remember, do not ever allow the sampling spoon to touch the tasting spoon, small plate, or bowl; and do not allow the food to fall back into the pot or pan.

STEP 4 - Taste the food.

STEP 5 - Transport the used spoons, plates, or bowls to the dishwashing area immediately after tasting. If disposables are used, discard immediately.

Remember taste testing is not eating!