

# Preventing Contamination When Using Cutting Boards

## Introduction

Cutting boards are used in virtually all commercial foodservice operations. Properly cleaning and sanitizing cutting boards can significantly reduce the risk of cross-contamination and foodborne illness.

## Here Are the Facts

Without appropriate cleaning, cutting boards can lead to cross-contamination. Fortunately, this type of cross-contamination usually can be avoided with the implementation of a few simple procedures. First, allocate one cutting board for produce; one for raw meat, poultry, and seafood; and another for slicing bread. Using multi-color cutting boards can help prevent cross contamination. Be sure to follow the procedure for washing the cutting board after preparing each food item.

Plastic cutting boards tend to be less porous than wood or some other materials; however, they will wear out over time, so be sure to replace them whenever necessary. A cutting board is worn out if it has grooves or large scratches from previous usage. Grooves can be hard to clean and often harbor harmful bacteria.



### Application

#### How to Clean Cutting Boards

- Scrape all food and other debris into a trash can before washing.
- If not being washed in a mechanical dishwasher, cutting boards must be sanitized in a 3-compartment sink.
  - ▶ In the first sink, immerse the cutting board in soap and hot water and allow it to soak. Remove remaining particles with a brush or cloth.
  - ▶ In the second sink, rinse the cutting board using clean water.
  - ▶ In the third sink, immerse the cutting board in a sanitizing solution. Follow the state public health department's regulations for mixing sanitizing solutions and for soaking time and temperature.
  - ▶ Remove the cutting board from the sanitizing solution and allow it to air dry.
  - ▶ Store cutting boards in a dry area.

#### Tips for Keeping Cutting Boards Safe

- Replace all worn cutting boards.
- Wash, rinse, and sanitize cutting boards after each use.
- For additional questions and information on proper cutting board use, call the Meat and Poultry Hotline at 1-888-MPHotline (1-888-674-6854).

**Remember, follow state or local health department requirements.**

#### References

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