



## Cross Contamination & How to Prevent

Cross contamination can happen at almost any point in the flow of food. When you know how and where it can happen it is fairly easy to prevent. Most basic way is to keep raw and ready-to-eat food away from each other.

Pathogens can move around easily in your operation. They can spread from food or unwashed hands to prep areas, equipment, utensils and other food.

### Guidelines for Preventing Cross-Contamination

- **Use separate equipment for raw and ready-to-eat food**
  - Example colored cutting boards and utensil handles can help. Yellow for poultry, Red for raw meat, Green for produce, Blue for shellfish
- **Clean and sanitize before and after each task**
  - Clean and sanitize all work surfaces, equipment and utensils before and after each task
  - Example after cutting raw chicken you cannot get by with just rinsing the equipment. Pathogens such as nontyphoidal Salmonella can contaminate food through cross-contamination.
- **Prep raw and ready-to-eat food at different times**
  - Example If you use one prep table of all tasks prepping ready-to-eat food before raw food, you can reduce the chance for cross-contamination
- **Buying prepared food**
  - Buy food that does not require much prepping or handling. Buying precooked chicken breast or chopped lettuce can reduce the change for cross-contamination