

Welcome to the Center for Food Protection e-Newsletter!

This newsletter is designed to provide regular updates from the RIDOH Center for Food Protection to the Rhode Island food service community. Each edition will include updates from the Center for Food Protection, upcoming events, and links to helpful food safety information.



Above: Food safety clip art demonstrating good hygiene and sanitation.

Where Can I Find the Food Code?

The RIDOH Center for Food Protection adopted the 2013 FDA Food Code by reference last year. What does this mean? There are two different Food Code documents. The [2018 Rhode Island Food Code \[health.us2.list-manage.com\]](http://health.us2.list-manage.com) contains regulations for Mobile Food Establishments and Temporary Food Establishments as well as other RI-specific information. The [2013 FDA Food Code \health.us2.list-

[manage.com](#)] is the comprehensive food safety regulation enacted in Rhode Island. Both the 2018 RI Food Code and 2013 FDA Food Code can be found through the "Regulations" tab on the [RIDOH Center for Food Protection website \[health.us2.list-manage.com\]](#).

New Food Service Business - Retail Application

The Food Service Establishment/Restaurant, Caterer/Commissary, and Non-Profit Food Service license applications have been combined into one application. Each section of the new application provides guidance regarding how to complete it and indicate whether any additional documents are required. Please be sure to identify the water source and sewage system type of your establishment/facility. Copies of the new application can be found in the Center for Food Protection at the Rhode Island Department of Health or on the [RIDOH Food Service Licensing Page \[health.us2.list-manage.com\]](#).

Center for Food Protection Spotlight - The Rhode to End Hunger

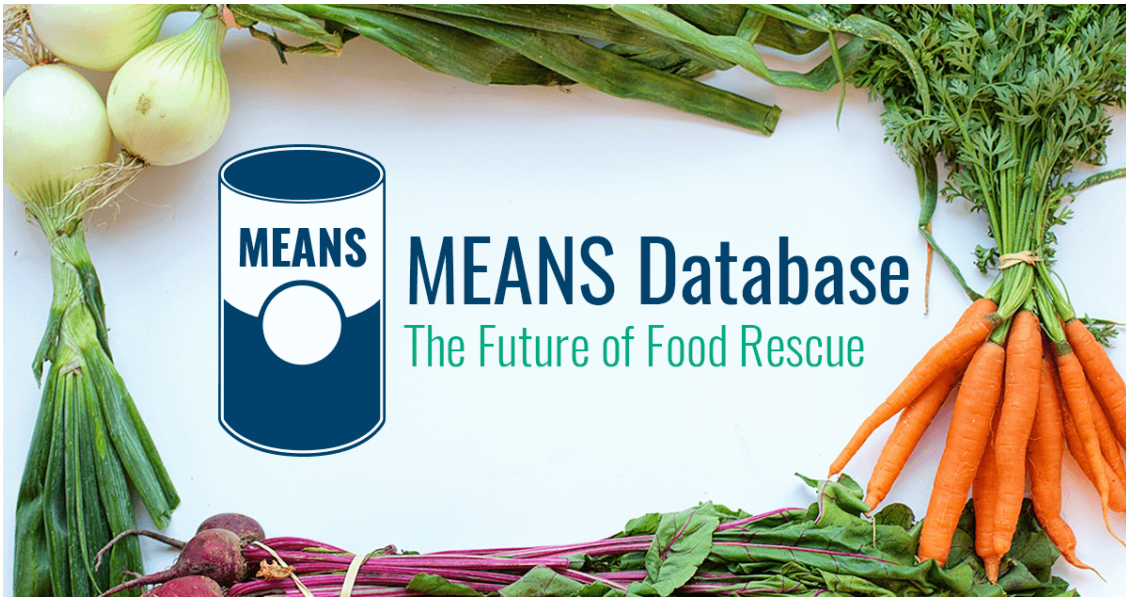
Did you know that 13% of Rhode Islanders (about 56,000 households) experience food insecurity? Or that 35-40% of waste at the landfill is compostable material, with much of it being food?

In an effort to mitigate both issues, the Rhode Island Department of Health – Center for Food Protection has partnered with a non-profit organization MEANS (Matching Excess and Need for Stability) Database to help move unused, wholesome food to organizations who can use it. MEANS utilizes an online platform to match food donors to nearby recipient sites such as shelters, soup kitchens, and food pantries.

A total of 23,177 pounds of food has been diverted from the landfill and donated through the Rhode to End Hunger Initiative. The goal of this initiative is to reach

100,000 pounds of wholesome donated food by 2023. Language has been added at the bottom of Food Protection inspection reports to promote the Rhode to End Hunger Initiative and how food establishments can sign up.

Additional information regarding the Rhode to End Hunger can be found in this [brochure \[health.us2.list-manage.com\]](https://health.us2.list-manage.com) and at the [MEANS website \[health.us2.list-manage.com\]](https://health.us2.list-manage.com).



Quality Improvement at the Center for Food Protection

The RIDOH Center for Food Protection has implemented quality improvement initiatives within a number of key areas, including:

1. Updating the [Public Inspection Portal \[health.us2.list-manage.com\]](https://health.us2.list-manage.com) with GIS mapping and improved search functions;

2. Developing [Hyperlinks to food safety resources \[health.us2.list-manage.com\]](http://health.us2.list-manage.com) (information sheets, temperature log templates) in Center for Food Protection inspection reports;
 3. Creating of a scoring system to improve Center for Food Protection uniformity and efficacy;
 4. Phasing out the Frozen Dessert Retail license to streamline licensing for the food service industry.
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Food Safety in the News: Outbreak of Listeria Infections

Things to know:

- This ongoing investigation by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has **not** identified a specific source of infection (food item, grocery store, or restaurant chain).
- **24 people** from **13 states** were reported to be infected with the *Listeria monocytogenes* strain.
- **22 hospitalizations** have been reported along with **2 deaths**.
- Listeria is most likely to affect **pregnant women and newborns, those aged 65 and older, and those with weakened immune systems**.

Foods more likely to contain Listeria:

- Dairy made with **unpasteurized (raw) milk**
 - Soft cheeses (such as queso fresco, brie, feta)
 - ice cream
 - yogurt
- Raw/lightly cooked sprouts
- Melons

- Hot dogs
- Lunch meats/cold cuts
- Smoked fish

Listeria symptoms:

- Fever, muscle aches, and other flu-like symptoms
- Headache, stiff neck, confusion, loss of balance, and convulsions
- Symptoms usually begin 1-4 weeks after exposure, and some cases reported even sooner

Sources: <https://www.cdc.gov/listeria/outbreaks/monocytogenes-08-19/index.html> [health.us2.list-manage.com]

<https://www.cdc.gov/listeria/prevention.html> [health.us2.list-manage.com]



The CDC's Four Steps to Food Safety

1) **Clean** - Always wash your hands and surfaces!

- Rinse fruits and vegetables.
- Before, during, and after preparing food and eating: wash your hands for 20 seconds.

- Hot and soapy water should be used to wash your utensils, cutting boards, and countertops.

2) Separate - Don't cross-contaminate!

- Make sure to keep raw meat, poultry, seafood, and eggs separate from ready-to-eat foods.
 - Separate cutting boards and plates should be used.
 - These foods should be stored separately in the fridge and when grocery shopping to prevent their juices from spreading to other foods.

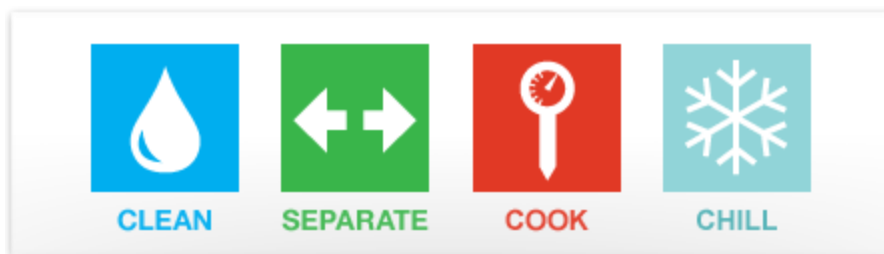
3) Cook - to the right temperature!

- Use a food thermometer to make sure foods are cooked to an internal temperature high enough to kill germs that make you sick:
 - 145°F for whole cuts of beef, pork, veal, and lamb (allow the meat to rest for three minutes).
 - 160°F for ground meats, such as beef and pork
 - 165°F for all poultry, including ground chicken and turkey
 - 165°F for leftovers and casseroles
 - 145°F for fresh ham (raw)
 - 145°F for fin fish or cook until flesh is opaque

4) Chill - Refrigerate promptly!

- Refrigerators should be kept below 40 degrees.
- Perishables must be refrigerated within two hours, and within one hour if it is above 90 degrees outside.
- Frozen food should be thawed in the refrigerator, in cold water, or in the microwave- never on the counter.

Source: <https://www.cdc.gov/foodsafety/keep-food-safe.html> [health.us2.list-manage.com]



Tips for Safe Holiday Cooking: Thanksgiving

If you are buying a **fresh** turkey:

- Buy one to two days before cooking it
- Do not buy a pre-stuffed turkey.
- Keep turkey stored in the refrigerator on a tray to catch juices.

If you are buying a **frozen** turkey:

- Keep turkey frozen until ready to thaw.
- Cook within one year for the best quality.
- Only buy pre-stuffed turkeys that have a USDA or state mark of inspection.
Do not thaw these before cooking.

How to thaw a turkey:

- **Refrigerator:** thaw for 24 hours for every four to five pounds
- **Cold water:** thaw for approximately 30 minutes per pound. Change water every 30 min.
- **Microwave:** Check the manual for minutes per pound and what power level to use.

Roasting a turkey:

- The oven temperature should be **no lower than 325 degrees**.
- The turkey should be placed on a rack in a shallow roasting pan.
- If you are going to stuff your turkey, stuff the cavities loosely. However, it is recommended that stuffing is cooked separately for optimal safety.
- **The turkey should be cooked to a minimum internal temperature of 165 degrees.**

Storing leftovers:

- Any leftovers (turkey, stuffing, or gravy) should not be left out at room temperature for more than two hours.
- Use leftovers within **three to four days**.
- If freezing leftovers, use within two to six months for the best quality.
- Cooked turkey can be eaten cold or reheated.
- Remember to reheat turkey to an internal temperature of 165 degrees!

Source: https://www.fsis.usda.gov/wps/portal/food-safety-education/get-answers/food-safety-fact-sheets/poultry-preparation/lets-talk-turkey/CT_Index [health.us2.list-manage.com]

Happy Thanksgiving!



Helpful Food Safety Resources

Federal Agency Websites:

- Centers for Disease Control and Protection (CDC): <https://www.cdc.gov/foodsafety/index.html> [health.us2.list-manage.com]
- The U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA): <https://www.fda.gov/food> [health.us2.list-manage.com]
- The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA): <https://www.usda.gov/topics/health-and-safety> [health.us2.list-manage.com]
- The USDA Food Safety and Inspection Service: <https://www.fsis.usda.gov/wps/portal/fsis/home> [health.us2.list-manage.com]

Food Safety Newsletters to Subscribe to:

- Food Safety News: <https://www.foodsafetynews.com/> [health.us2.list-manage.com]
- FIGHT BAC! Partnership for Food Safety Education: <http://www.fightbac.org> [health.us2.list-manage.com]

Questions or Feedback?

If you have any questions or feedback about the Center for Food Protection's Newsletter, please feel free to complete our Google form survey:

https://docs.google.com/forms/d/12VZpcBYxbT_rswEUwpWnoJcyrA4hmfjGpstUXjmnRw/edit [health.us2.list-manage.com]