



CROSS CONTAMINATION

Cross contamination - do you really know what it is? When I conduct food safety training I ask that exact question, and always the first answer is "raw food contaminating cooked food." While this certainly is an example of cross contamination, it isn't what cross contamination is. So do you know what it is? Cross contamination is when something that is contaminated, comes in contact with something that is not contaminated. It doesn't even have to be a food. Can you think of any examples? Of course, the raw food to cooked food is a form of cross contamination, however it isn't the only form. What else can you think of?

Some recently publicised events include:

- A food poisoning outbreak in Melbourne, where more than 700 people were sick. The cause was linked back to one food handler who did not wash their hands after going to the toilet.
- A national product recall involving a food manufacturer where one employee turned up to work when they were ill, who handled food products directly and transferred their illness onto the food.

But how many other examples can you think of?

- Handling money
- Wearing your uniform/protective clothing to work
- Wearing yesterdays uniform
- Using temperature probes on raw food then cooked food without sanitising
- Topping up displays with fresh food, rather than

- removing the old container
- Touching door handles/phones/fridge doors
- Shaking hands
- Cardboard boxes on benches that have previously been received and stored on the floor
- Rodents running across your benches
- Handling rubbish
- Changing nappies
- Not cleaning food contact surfaces
- Etc.

Can you think of anymore?

This month, rather than having a "Question of the Month", I will reward the individual who can come up with the highest number of unique examples of Cross Contamination, with either a free digital probe thermometer or a complimentary Nationally Accredited food handlers course. Email me directly and list the examples (using the numbering function). In issue 23, I will announce who the clever person is.

Until next edition,
Eat well. Eat safe!

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Providing safe food solutions and quality assurance services