



## POTLUCK MEAL FACT SHEET

Potluck Meals are no-fee communal meals where **all** the attendees bring a small amount of food to share. Unfortunately, potluck meals can present a public health hazard due to the large variety of foods offered. Foods known as Potentially Hazardous Foods (PHFs), also known as Time/Temperature for Safety Control (TCS) foods prepared in non-commercial kitchens, can result in life threatening foodborne illnesses. Good planning and proper sanitation practices reduce the likelihood of a foodborne illness. Food allergies may also be life threatening and precautions must be taken when planning, preparing and serving foods that contain allergens in their ingredients. Organizers and sponsors of any food event must not neglect good food protection and sanitation practices when planning, organizing, and holding the event. Food safety is your responsibility!

**A student Potluck meal proposal requires food handlers to take a food safety [\(Potluck/BBQ\) on-line OWL training](#) and quiz prior to having the food event accepted. The certificates of completion must be uploaded to Campus Pulse as part of the Event Submittal process.**

Potentially Hazardous Foods, (PHFs) also known as Time/Temperature for Safety Control (TCS) foods include: meats, poultry, seafood, dairy products, eggs and bacon, raw seed sprouts, sliced melons, tofu, partially and fully cooked vegetables, potatoes, squash, onions, rice, peppers, sliced fruit and salads. These items can all cause life threatening illnesses if they are not handled safely during transportation, storage, preparation and cooking, and delivery process. Cross contamination, improper food holding temperatures, and improper cooking temperatures are all conditions that may contribute to unsafe food and potential foodborne illnesses.

A person who is sick, has diarrhea, vomiting or is jaundiced, or has a cut or lesion on their hands, or face must NOT handle food and all food handler must sign an agreement form [Food Handler/Volunteer Agreement](#) stating that they are free from illness

Prior to preparing any foods, everyone should thoroughly wash their hands with soap and warm water. Hand washing is to be repeated after any act that could contaminate hands, such as coughing, eating, handling garbage, or using the toilet. Food-grade safe (non-latex) gloves should be used and changed frequently along with hand washing.

Prior to preparing any foods, all surfaces shall be cleaned thoroughly. Do not prepare different food types such as raw meats and then fruits and vegetables without cleaning all counters, cutting boards, wares, and utensils in-between uses with hot soapy water followed by a kitchen disinfectant cleaner.

Tongs or other utensils or tissues shall be used for necessary handling of any unwrapped Ready-To-Eat food product. **Bare-Hand-Contact with Ready-To-Eat Foods is not allowed.** Food-grade safe non-latex gloves shall be used. Communal bowls are not allowed and cross contamination shall be completely avoided.

## REQUIREMENTS FOR A POTLUCK MEAL - All participants must ensure that:

- Chilled ingredients must be used for all cold dishes.
  - Cooking times and temperatures must be maintained at 15 seconds for food safety:
    - 165° F – Poultry; stuffing; stuffed meat, seafood, poultry or pasta
    - 155° F – Ground meats; ground seafood; shell eggs hot held for service
    - 145° F – Seafood, fish, shell & shellfish; steak/chops, beef, pork, veal, lamb chops
    - 145° F – Roast of pork, beef, veal, and lamb cooked and holding 145°F for 4 minutes.
    - Food is delivered and held at the proper temperatures, 41° F for cold foods, 140° F for hot foods. Keep **HOT FOODS HOT**, above 140°F, and **COLD FOODS COLD**, below 41°F.
  - Food is delivered at the proper time, (delivered immediately for service after preparation, travel time shall be not more than 30 minutes).
  - Food is held for not more than 30 minutes and kept at the proper temperature.
  - Food is served within the proper time, (served immediately for service, serving time not to exceed 1.00 hours).
  - Food shall be discarded if total travel and service time exceeds **2.0 hours**.
  - Food that is leftover shall be discarded into University food composting bins.
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- Food Handlers shall wash their hands [i](#) prior to preparing to and during the cooking and serving process.
  - Food grade safe *non-latex* gloves shall be worn in between proper hand washing. All food handlers must frequently wash their hands and in between each glove use. Gloves shall be changed after one use, (*i.e. single use task*), or after becoming soiled or torn. Hand sanitizer may be used after proper hand washing has occurred.
  - The cooking area and utensils shall be neat and clean.
  - Chewing gum, eating, drinking and use of tobacco products are prohibited in the cooking and serving areas. The University is a smoke-free campus.
  - A separate set of utensils/platters shall be used for raw foods and cooked foods. All food handlers must ensure that there is no cross-contamination occurring.
  - ALLERGENS** such as **wheat, peanuts, tree nuts, dairy, soy, eggs, fish, and shellfish** must be labeled with labels or tent cards for each type of item. ([Sample](#)).
  - All ingredients** listings on original packaging must be available for review by any customer, or use this form (ingredients form here). <https://ehs.umass.edu/food-waiver-ingredients-additional-page>
  - Transport food items in covered containers (coolers and warmers) with original packaging.

# UMassAmherst

## Environmental Health and Safety – Environmental Health Program

117 Draper Hall 40 Campus Center Way Amherst, MA 01003

Phone: 413-545-2682

- Keep HOT FOODS HOT, above 140°F; keep COLD FOODS COLD, below 41°F.
- Ice used for cooling any food or beverage CANNOT be used for any other purpose. Store all beverage containers in a new barrel of ice, or barrels used solely for this purpose.
- ALL FOOD MUST BE COVERED to protect it from dust, flies and people.
- No community serving of food is allowed; tongs and spoons are required for each food item. Individual plates/cups are required. Condiments shall be from squeeze bottles where individual servings can occur.
- No person who has a cold, sore throat, or is ill or has an infected cut on the hands, arms, or face may prepare or handle food served to the public. Everyone must sign a Food Handler Volunteer (FHV) form (form attached) which indicates that each individual is free from illness. <https://ehs.umass.edu/food-handler-volunteer-agreement-form>
- Any corrective action deemed necessary by EH&S or Auxiliary Enterprises shall be taken by the person in charge of the operation or the right to continue the event or future events may be forfeited.
- The Student Food Event Organizer must maintain a list of who donated what food item in case of any necessary follow-up. This list, the training certificates, and the signed FHV forms shall be sent or delivered to: EH&S, 117 Draper Hall after the event is held. Any complaint of foodborne illness shall be reported immediately to EH&S.
- Please read the **EH&S Food Event Policy** <https://ehs.umass.edu/food-event-descriptions-and-instructions-read-first> and **Allergen Fact Sheet** <https://ehs.umass.edu/food-allergy-fact-sheet>.
- Contact EH&S with any questions at 413-545-2682; ask for the Environmental Health Program. You may request an in-person training with 30-day's notice.

**All foods containing ALLERGENS such as tree nuts, peanuts, dairy, soy, eggs, wheat, fish and shellfish must be labeled. As an alternative to an ingredients label, table tent cards listing the ingredients for each food item may be used. No home canned foods, pickled or brined foods are allowed. Also, no admission fee may be charged for the food or the potluck meal. A sign must accompany the meal that the food and event has NOT been inspected by University Office of Environmental Health & Safety (EH&S) or the local Health Department.**

*\*Private potluck meals shared by members of a Residence Hall or Department, (not advertised to the public), are private events and not part of the food-waiver registration process. Safe food handling practices are imperative in all circumstances.*

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