



*October
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Bite-Sized Food Safety

**Food safety resources
for front-line managers
to train food workers**



Food Defense

ASK: What is "food defense"?

ANSWER: Food defense is the effort to protect food from acts of intentional adulteration or tampering.

ASK: How is food defense different than food safety?

ANSWER: Both food safety and food defense involve activities to minimize or prevent adulteration of the food supply. However, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) uses the term "food defense" to mean the effort to protect food from intentional acts of adulteration, while food safety is concerned with the unintentional adulteration of the food supply.

ASK: How common are intentional acts of food adulteration?

ANSWER: Fortunately, intentional contamination of food products is fairly rare. However, intentional adulteration events can cause enormous harm by sickening customers and damaging the reputation of a food establishment.

IF YOU SEE SOMETHING, SAY SOMETHING

ASK: What are some examples of intentional food adulteration?



ANSWER: Examples run the gamut from a sick prank to a bioterrorist attack intended to panic the entire population. Here are some examples of what could happen:

- ◆ A disgruntled restaurant manager peed in the soft serve ice cream mix. (This really happened in Vancouver, WA.)
- ◆ Soy sauce was contaminated with methamphetamines at a Japanese hibachi restaurant. Seven patrons went to the hospital. The source of the drugs was never determined. The restaurant closed permanently due to the loss of business from the bad publicity. (This happened recently in Florida.)
- ◆ In an attempt to influence a local election, a cult-like group intentionally contaminated the salad bars at ten restaurants with Salmonella making 751 people sick. (This really happened in Oregon.)

ASK: What can a food establishment do to prevent these types of incidents?

ANSWER: A food establishment should implement the “**Four A’s**” of food defense.

- ◆ **Assess** your food establishment to identify and reduce vulnerabilities to intentional food adulteration
- ◆ Eliminate **Access** to food products by unauthorized persons
- ◆ Be **Alert** to things that seem out of the ordinary such as:
 - Opened packaging on food products being received
 - Foods that don’t look, smell, or taste right
 - Unexpected visitors without identification
 - Suspicious activity by employees
 - Angry customers making threats
- ◆ **Act** quickly by calling the Health Department and law enforcement if you think food may have been intentionally adulterated.

ASK: What should I do if someone I don't recognize shows up claiming to be from the pest control company, the Health Department, or from the corporate office?



ANSWER: Ask to see their identification before allowing them into your facility. If you still have concerns, call their office to confirm that they are who they say they are. Health Department employees should always present their official county ID when they enter your establishment.

ASK: What can be done to limit customer access to foods others may eat?

ANSWER: Reduce unobserved customer access to foods that others may eat by doing things such as:

- ◆ Not storing food products in areas that are easily accessible to customers
- ◆ Not allowing any foods served to one customer and not consumed (such as a basket of bread or tortilla chips, bowl of salsa, or pitcher of water) to be served to another customer
- ◆ Having dispensers for condiments such as ketchup and mustard in a central area instead of having bottles of these on each table
- ◆ Having an employee stationed at the salad bar or food bar to assure that patrons don't intentionally or unintentionally contaminate food products there
- ◆ Better yet, removing the salad bar or food bar will eliminate this risk, help control costs, and reduce food waste



ASK: Do security systems help prevent incidents of intentional food contamination?

ANSWER: Yes, security systems such as doors with card key access that identify who enters the building and when and video cameras that record can be a deterrent to this type of crime. They can also help identify the perpetrators if a crime is committed.

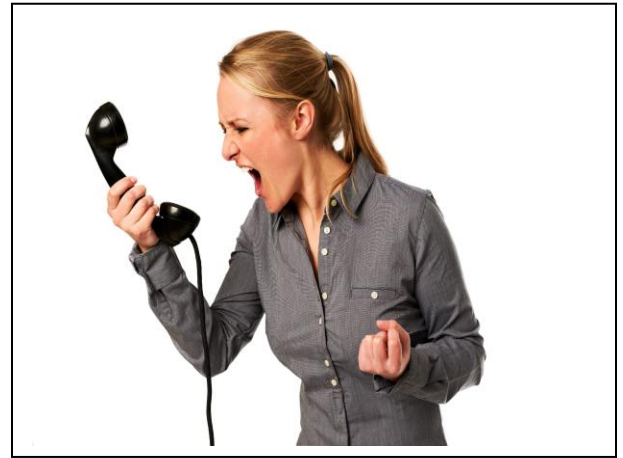
ASK: How can I spot foods that were adulterated before they arrived at our food establishment?

ANSWER: Examine all food products coming into your facility for opened packaging, broken safety seals, or signs of tampering. Refuse to accept any food products about which you have questions.

IF YOU SEE SOMETHING, SAY SOMETHING

ASK: What if a disgruntled staff member or angry customer makes false allegations to the Health Department or law enforcement?

ANSWER: The proper authorities will thoroughly investigate the allegations. If there is nothing to them, that will be revealed by the investigation. It should be noted that making a false police report is a serious crime.



ASK: What should a food establishment do if a disgruntled staff member or angry customer threatens to poison food products or otherwise cause harm to a food establishment's customers or business?

ANSWER: Take these threats very seriously. Any threats like these should be immediately reported to law enforcement and the Health Department. Making terroristic threats is a serious crime.

IF YOU SEE SOMETHING, SAY SOMETHING



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- ◆ **Assess your food establishment**
 - ◆ **Eliminate uncontrolled access to food**
 - ◆ **Be alert for suspicious activity**
 - ◆ **Act quickly to report incidents**

FOOD DEFENSE IS EVERYONE'S RESPONSIBILITY