

# Partner Agency Food Safety Training 2026



**SECOND HARVEST  
FOOD BANK**

of MIDDLE TENNESSEE

*Feeding Hope*<sup>®</sup>

# Food Safety Training Requirements

 **All Second Harvest Partner Agencies are required to complete Food Safety Training.** This training fulfills the requirements for agencies that operate Food Pantries, Mobile Pantries, and other food distribution programs that *do not cook, prepare, or serve meals*.

 **Agencies that prepare meals must meet additional requirements:**

- At least one staff member or volunteer must have **Food Protection Manager Certification**.
- This person must be actively involved in, or oversee, meal preparation.
- The certification must be issued by an organization accredited by the **American National Standards Institute (ANSI)**.

Accredited organizations are listed here:

<https://anabpd.ansi.org/accreditation/credentialing/personnel-certification/food-protection-manager/ALLdirectoryListing?menuID=8&prgID=8&statusID=4>

# Welcome to Food Safety Training

Safe food storage, handling, and cooking are critical to preventing **foodborne illness**—which happens when people eat food contaminated with harmful bacteria, viruses, or other pathogens.

🛡️ **The good news:** Foodborne illness is **preventable**, and we all play a role in keeping food safe!

Each year in the U.S., foodborne illness causes:


- 48 million illnesses
- 128,000 hospitalizations
- 3,000 deaths


Certain groups are at **higher risk**, including:


- Infants & children
- Older adults
- People with weakened immune systems



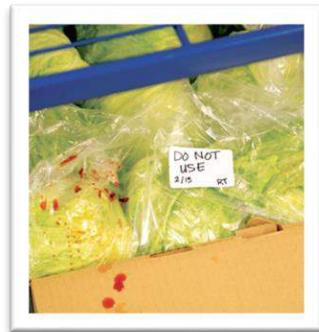
# How Food Becomes Unsafe

 **Poor Cleaning & Sanitizing:** Dirty equipment, surfaces, or utensils can transfer harmful pathogens to food.

 **Poor Personal Hygiene:** Germs from unwashed hands, uncovered wounds, or improper glove use can easily spread to food.

 **Cross-Contamination:** Pathogens can transfer from one food or surface to another—for example, raw meat juices touching ready-to-eat foods.

 **Time-Temperature Abuse:** Leaving food too long in the temperature danger zone (**40°F–140°F**) allows bacteria to grow rapidly.



# Safe Food Storage Practices

Always store food indoors in a dedicated food storage area that is clean, dry, and secure.

➔ **Keep food at least 6 inches off the floor** and away from walls for airflow and pest prevention.

🍎 **Store ready-to-eat foods above raw meat, poultry, or seafood.**

✗ **Never leave food unattended outside** (this includes *Blessing Boxes*). Unattended food can be tampered with or contaminated by animals, weather, or people.

🚫 **No eating, gum, smoking, chewing tobacco, or vaping** in food storage areas.



# Discard Cans with These Defects

Look out for the following signs of unsafe or damaged canned goods:

- 🏷️ **Missing or unreadable labels**
- 📅 **No code date**
- 🥫 **Crushed cans** that can't stack properly
- 💣 **Severe dents** in seams or deep dents in body
- 🥫 **Swollen or bulging ends**
- 🧼 **Rust** that doesn't wipe off
- 💧 **Leaks or holes** — any sign of liquid or damage



# Discard Dry Goods with These Issues

Look out for the following signs of damaged & unsafe packaged foods:


 **Unlabeled, incorrect, or unreadable labels**

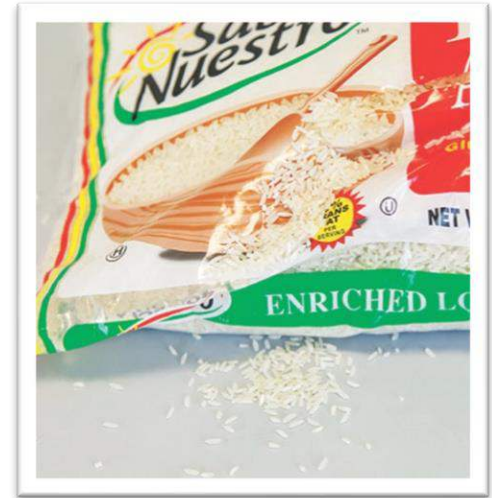
 **Missing code dates**

 **Open or exposed packaging**

 **Packaging that's ripped, cut, or punctured**

 **Wet, stained, or damaged packaging**

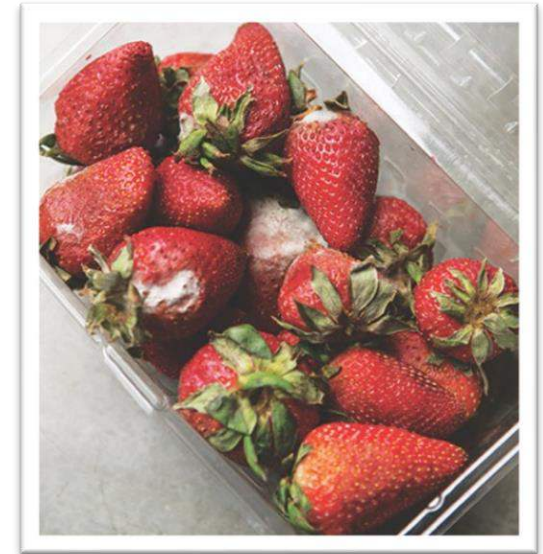
 **Signs of pests** — droppings, gnaw marks, insects, or tiny holes



# Evaluate Produce Before Use

Discard any produce with these signs of spoilage or contamination:

- ✘ **Mold, decay, rot, or strong odor**
- 👉 **Broken or split skin** — not intact
- 😞 **Severe bruising or soft spots**
- ❄️ **Cut produce not kept at 40°F or lower**
- 🐛 **Signs of insects or pest damage**



# Repackaging Food

Partner Agencies **should not repackaging food** at any time. This includes bulk products, such as large packages of frozen meat or 50-pound bags of rice.

The USDA has specific requirements for a **Clean Room** to repackaging food.

*A Clean Room is:*

- A USDA inspected and approved facility
- A separate enclosed room dedicated to bulk repacking
- Built to commercial food service construction standards
- Prevents as many environmental contaminants as possible



# Safe Food Storage Temperatures

Type of Food	Temperature
Refrigerated food & Cut Produce	40°F or lower
Frozen food	0°F or lower Frozen Solid



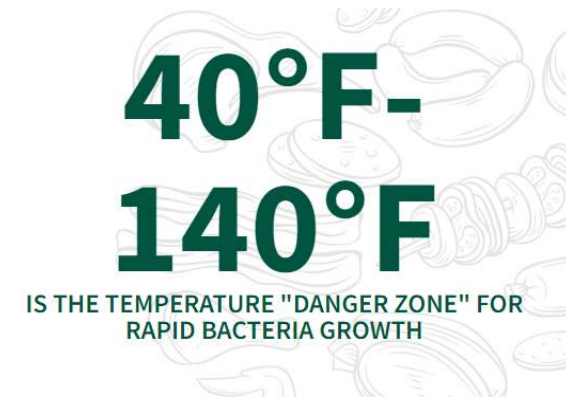
## Regularly Monitor Cold Storage Temperatures

 Use a **tube thermometer** inside each refrigerator and freezer to check temperatures at a glance

 Utilize a **Temperature Log** for every unit to catch problems early

# Time and Temperature Control

Bacteria grow **most rapidly** between 40°F and 140°F. This is known as the **temperature danger zone**. Some bacteria can double every 20 minutes in this range.



**Example:** Imagine you take cold food out of the refrigerator (originally at 40°F) and leave it on a table for neighbors to pickup during your pantry hours. After 1 hour, the food may reach 60°F. After 2 hours, it could be near 80°F.

⚠ The longer it sits, the more bacteria multiply & the food may be no longer safe to eat—even if it still *looks* or *smells* fine.

📌 Always keep cold foods cold (below 40°F) and hot foods hot (above 140°F) to stay safe!

# Transporting Food Safely

## General Guidelines

- Make sure food storage areas in vehicles are clean and well-maintained to prevent contamination
- For pickup trucks or open-air trailers, cover and secure food with tarps, as required by TDOT regulations.



## Temperature-Controlled for Safety (TCS) Foods






- TCS foods must be kept at safe temperatures during staging, transport, and storage.
- Use either an **active system** (refrigerated truck or van) or a **passive system** (insulated coolers, ice packs, or thermal blankets).
- Use an infrared thermometer to quickly check food surface temperatures upon delivery. **Reject** food if it arrives above safe limits
  - ✓ Cold items: **40°F or below**
  - ✓ Frozen items: **solidly frozen**

# Understanding Food Allergies



# Prevent Cross-Contact with Allergens

**Cross-contact happens when allergens accidentally touch allergen-free food.** Follow these steps to keep food safe:

-  **Wash hands** and change gloves after handling allergens.
-  **Use dedicated shelves** for products containing allergens.
-  **Store food with allergens separately.** Do not store food containing allergens above allergen-free food.
-  **Inspect food packaging for leaks or spills** that can cause cross-contact contamination.
-  **Clean & sanitize all surfaces that come in contact with an allergen** before using them for allergen-free foods.

# Cleaning & Sanitizing

Food residues left on surfaces and equipment provide a breeding ground for bacteria that can cause foodborne illness.

✓ **Cleaning** physically removes food particles and debris.

✓ **Sanitizing** further reduces microorganisms to safe levels, lowering the risk of contamination.

Clean and sanitize all food contact surfaces, utensils, and equipment after each use, especially when handling raw foods or produce.



# Keep Pests Out!

A pest-free facility is a safer facility. Here's how to prevent infestations:

- **Use a licensed pest control company** or perform regular self-inspections
- **Keep detailed pest control records** – log all inspections and treatments
- **Seal cracks and entry points** around doors and windows

## **Garbage tips to prevent pests:**


- Always **cover indoor trash containers** when not in use
- **Clean trash bins** (inside and out) regularly
- Never clean trash bins in food prep or storage areas
- Keep **outdoor dumpster lids closed** at all times

 **Prevention is key—pests can spread illness and contaminate food!**



# Personal Hygiene

Follow these best practices to reduce the risk of foodborne illness:

 **Wash hands thoroughly** – Handwashing is one of the most effective ways to stop the spread of germs. Wash your hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds:

- Before preparing or handling food
- After using the restroom
- After coughing, sneezing, or blowing your nose
- After touching your hair, face, body, or phone



 **Post handwashing signs** near handwashing sinks and in restrooms

 **Wear clean clothing and aprons**

 **Keep hair secured** – Tie back long hair or wear a hairnet or hat

# Thank You for Attending!

We appreciate your time and commitment to keeping food safe for our community. We hope you're leaving today with greater confidence in your food safety practices.

## **Questions?**

We're here to support you! Don't hesitate to reach out.

## **Before You Go...**

Please take a few minutes to complete a quick **Knowledge Check**.

It's just a few short questions to help reinforce what we learned today!

[https://forms.office.com/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?id=6BEmgCAIKUW\\_X5A4lw1eDY9FV\\_YfCIPigDZriDcBEVUQkIxWjVFRktXRIkzS0NLOVNJSINXTTIYTS4u](https://forms.office.com/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?id=6BEmgCAIKUW_X5A4lw1eDY9FV_YfCIPigDZriDcBEVUQkIxWjVFRktXRIkzS0NLOVNJSINXTTIYTS4u)