Salad Bar Service and Food Safety Standard Operating Procedure

Purpose

- To confirm that Food Service staff are properly utilizing and maintaining the salad bar.
- To prevent foodborne illness by ensuring that all items held on salad bars are protected from contamination.

Scope

This procedure applies to any Food Service staff who are responsible for maintaining and monitoring the self-service salad bars.

Key Words

Contamination, Self-Service, Salad Bars

Instructions

1. Train Food Service staff on using the procedures in this SOP.
2. Follow state or local health department requirements.
3. Follow the Personal Hygiene SOP and Hand Washing SOP.
4. Follow the manufacturer's instructions for pre-chilling food salad bar equipment before use. If using ice packs/blocks, make sure they are frozen before use when placing them at the base of the salad bar.
5. Keep all salad bar items in containers refrigerated once they have been cleaned and sanitized to help maintain a safe product temperature while on the salad bar.
6. Refrigerate all food items or bottled items (such as salad dressing) and their backups before putting them out on the salad bar.
7. Wash all fruits and vegetables by following the procedures in the Washing Fruits and Vegetables SOP.

    a. Bacteria from the outside of raw produce can be transferred to the inside when cut or peeled. Even products that will be peeled must be washed properly.
8. Start with a clean, sanitized workspace including countertops, cutting boards, and utensils. Clean and sanitize all surfaces and utensils between and after preparing food items.
9. Prepare all cut fruits and vegetables by following the procedures in the Holding Hot and Cold Potentially Hazardous Foods SOP.
10. Place dividers according to the planned Salad Bar Layout Tool.
11. Place all exposed food under sneeze guards.
12. Take temperatures of all food items before and after meal service. Record on the Salad Bar Weekly Temperature Log.
    a. Products must be maintained at or below 41°F or must only stay out on the salad bar for a two-hour period.
    b. Check temperatures at least every two hours to verify that it remains at or below 41 °F.
13. Provide an appropriate, clean, and sanitized utensil for each container on each side of the salad bar.
    a. For instance, provide tongs for leafy greens to build a salad. Provide spoodles for composed salads that require a specific measurement to be creditable.
    b. If serving utensils fall on the floor or become contaminated, replace utensils with clean, sanitized ones.
    c. Assist students who are unable to use utensils properly.
14. Replace existing food containers with new ones when replenishing the salad bar or when there has been cross-contact or contamination.
    a. Never combine an old product with a new one, even if it has been properly handled.
    b. Do not fill containers with protein more than halfway. This will ensure that the product remains at a safe temperature and is more cost-effective when replenishing.
15. Ensure that students use a clean tray when returning to the salad bar.
16. Store eating utensils with the handles up or in a manner that prevents students from touching the food-contact surfaces.
17. Record quantity of food used, quantity of leftovers, and waste at the end of service on the Salad Bar Weekly Production Record.

    a. Following food safety protocols, products may be reused for service the following day if they are clean, free of other items, appear fresh, and have been held at or below 41°F, or have been out on the salad bar for less than 2 hours. Label and date all items prepared for the salad bar.
    b. However, check with your state or local health department for regulations on replenishing and reusing food on the salad bar.
18. Avoid using spray chemicals to clean salad bars when in use. Use a fresh sanitizer bucket with a towel to sanitize handles and tray counter before, in-between, and after meal service.
19. At the end of meal service, kitchen staff remove used salad bar containers, bins, and utensils.
    a. If returning items to a central kitchen, they will thoroughly clean and sanitize salad bar items in accordance with the Cleaning and Sanitizing Grab and Go Carts SOP.

Monitoring

During all hours of operation, Food Service staff will:

1. Monitor and record food temperatures in accordance with the Holding Cold Potentially Hazardous Foods SOP.
2. Continually monitor food containers to ensure that utensils are stored on a clean, sanitized surface or in the containers, with the handles out of the food.
3. Continually monitor students' use of the salad bar to ensure that students are not:
    a. Touching food with their bare hands
    b. Coughing, spitting, or sneezing on the food
    c. Placing foreign objects in the food
    d. Using incorrect utensils from other containers
    e. Using the same tray and bowl/plate for subsequent trips

Corrective Action

1. Retrain any Food Service staff found not following the procedures in this SOP.
2. Demonstrate to students how to use utensils properly.
3. Remove and discard contaminated food.
4. Discard the food if it cannot be determined how long the food temperature was above 41°F.
5. Discard past-date and poor-quality fruit and vegetables.

Verification and Record Keeping

- The Kitchen Lead will verify that Food Service staff are assigned to maintain salad bars during all hours of operation.
- Food Service staff will record temperatures of food items and document corrective actions taken on the Salad Bar Temperature/Production Log. This form is to be kept on file for a minimum of 3 years.
- Food Service staff will document any discarded food on the Damaged or Discarded Product Log. The Kitchen Lead will verify that appropriate corrective actions are being taken by reviewing, initialing, and dating the Damaged or Discarded Product Log each day.
- The Salad Bar Temperature/Production Log and the Damaged or Discarded Product Log must be kept on file for a minimum of three years.

Date Implemented _____ By _____

Date Reviewed _____ By _____

Date Revised_____ By _____