



SOLANO COUNTY

County Administrator's Office

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Separation and protection can prevent cross contamination!

SOLANO COUNTY – Cross contamination is one of the top five contributors to foodborne illness in the United States.

The Environmental Health Division of Solano County's Department of Resource Management will reinforce that message with an informational campaign in September – National Food Safety Education Month. The campaign will target people who work in the more than 2,000 restaurants and other food facilities across the county; however, health officials point out the importance of separation and protection to prevent cross contamination everywhere food is prepared or stored.

Cross contamination is how bacteria can be spread, especially when those bacteria are transferred to foods that are not cooked or are considered "ready to eat". While salads and fresh fruit are essential for everyday nutrients, if they are not handled properly, they can harbor harmful bacteria which can get you and your family sick.

The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) estimates one out of six Americans, or 48 million people, get sick each year as a result of inadequate hand washing. Of these people, about 128,000 are hospitalized and 3,000 people die from food-borne illnesses.

During September, Environmental Health staff will conduct inspections at hundreds of food facilities to assess compliance with food safety requirements related to storage, sanitizing, and proper techniques to reduce cross contamination. Businesses will receive certificates of recognition for demonstrating exemplary practices that promote separation and protection to prevent cross contamination.

Separating raw meat, poultry, seafood, and eggs while shopping, and at home can protect your family from foodborne illness. Cleaning and sanitizing surfaces where these products are prepared prior to using them for ready to eat foods is essential to creating a food safety culture at home and at work. As part of the National Food Safety Education Month the CDC, www.foodsafety.gov, and the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) have published several tips to keep your food safe in an effort not to cross contaminate. These tips are available on their websites, or you can follow the links below.

And, as always, wash your hands!

Resources:

[For a safe plate, don't cross-contaminate. 7 tips to keep your food safe. \(cdc.gov\)](https://www.cdc.gov/foodsafety/7-tips-to-keep-your-food-safe)

<https://www.foodsafety.gov/keep-food-safe/4-steps-to-food-safety>

<https://www.fda.gov/food/consumers/food-safety-education-month>

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