

FOOD PREPARATION CONTEST

Roberta Newman

CLEANLINESS

Most people know to wash their hands before cooking, but what else needs to be cleaned in the kitchen before you start chopping, or opening containers?

Hands-

wash them before touching ingredients or utensils
before setting the table to serve
after handling raw eggs and meats.
whenever coughed, sneezed, touched hair, nose, floor or garbage sack
upon re-entering the kitchen during a contest

Work Area-

wash counters before setting out ingredients, equipment
wipe down stove top and inside microwave (even if you won't use them)
clean card table (or table setting area) before setting out serving dishes
after interview: wash down counters, stove top and card table again

Equipment/Supplies-

1. before opening metal cans, rinse off lids
2. after unpacking from boxes, rinse out mixing bowls, cooking containers and utensils
3. before setting the table, rinse off place setting and serving dishes.
4. bring only clean dishtowels, hand towels and potholders/oven mitts to use
5. at home, examine all pots and pans to verify cleanliness
6. at end of contest, clean drain stopper in sink –throw food in garbage sack
7. once counter has been cleaned, set out strips of wax paper to catch any spills

Ingredients-

- rinse off fruits and vegetables before peeling, slicing or chopping
- rinse off egg shell before cracking
- if raw poultry is rinsed off, be sure to sanitize the sink immediately

Sanitation-

- * enter the contest with hair pulled back –scrunchie, barrette, rubber band, etc
- * keep boxes/ice chest on floor at all times, even during unloading and repacking
- * Use a bleach/water solution (1T. bleach to 1 gal. water) in a labeled spray bottle or a food safe kitchen anti-bacterial product (the label *must* say food safe!).
- * Sanitize cutting boards, sink, hands, counter, knives and anything else raw eggs/meat touch
- * wear apron during food prep and baking session of contest – remove after serving judge
- * tape garbage sack to side of work area. Use appropriate size for amount of garbage generated. Line w/ plastic bag

ORGANIZING YOUR WORK SPACE

Your bedroom at home may be cluttered, but that doesn't mean your kitchen counter needs to be. Learning how to set out ingredients and equipment will reduce chances of making mistakes in contest.

Cookie Sheets-

- ◆ one method is to place equipment on one cookie sheet, ingredients on another cookie sheet
- ◆ triangle method – all ingredients start on one cookie sheet and are moved to the other after they are used. The center of the table (directly in front of you) is reserved for the measuring, mixing, etc.

Jars-

fruit jars, ceramic vases are great for displaying utensils while taking up limited counter space

Place Setting/Serving dishes-

Why set table setting before beginning food prep? :

- * it keeps clutter down in kitchen
- * reduces chance of breakage
- * allows food to be served as soon as completed

TASK SEQUENCING

Move over recipes! Task sequencing is taking over. Never again will you forget to preheat that oven or hang that garbage sack.

Definition-

Task sequencing incorporates a recipe (ingredients, amounts, measurements and utensils) into the steps needed to prepare the food(s).

Advantages-

- ◆ breaks large tasks into small steps (manageable sized)
- ◆ you always know what to do, never having a look of fear or uncertainty
- ◆ you will finish the contest quicker because you stayed focused
- ◆ reduce risk of forgetting to use an ingredient or worse yet, use the ingredient twice
- ◆ steps are excellent way to show your organizational ability
- ◆ your self confidence is increased with this successful approach

How it Works-

1. begin by listing each step of food prep in great detail
2. number each step
3. arrange steps so they follow a logical order
4. after making the food several times, work toward condensing the wording of the step
5. vary the size of the print (bold, capitalization, lower case, etc) so important info stands out
6. use arrows and other symbols to replace some words
7. first 14 and last 5 or so steps are generic for all contests
8. tape the list to a cupboard in kitchen so it is at eye level and away from foods that may spill on it
9. after completing a step, cross it out or check it off