

Cleaning & Sanitizing

Part 1 of 2

TWO DISTINCT STEPS FOR TREATING THE HOME KITCHEN

Cleaning and sanitizing (or disinfecting) are two important processes for helping prevent food-borne illness, whether you're cooking or canning. Yes, they are two separate processes, and they're both necessary. First, some quick definitions:

Cleaning: Physically removing dirt and debris from surfaces, usually with water, soap/detergent, and scrubbing. Cleaning alone isn't sufficient to remove pathogens.

Sanitizing: Reducing pathogens to a safe level so that illness, contamination or spoilage is unlikely to occur.

Disinfecting: Destroying most pathogenic and other microorganisms. Products that disinfect destroy or irreversibly inactivate the specific microorganisms listed on their labels (but they may not inactivate spores).

Sanitizing is generally considered the acceptable level for treating *home kitchen* surfaces. However, if there are vulnerable persons in the home (elderly, pregnant women, children under age 5, or severely ill or immuno-compromised individuals), then disinfecting would be appropriate. For known or suspected cases of COVID-19, follow current CDC guidelines.

For **food contact surfaces**, use a commercial product that specifies that it's safe for such surfaces (check labels carefully or contact the manufacturer). If making your own generic bleach solution, use a sanitizing level only.

See our companion poster, Cleaning & Sanitizing – Part 2, for the steps as well as how to make your own bleach sanitizing/disinfection solutions.

For further information, refer to this publication from Colorado State Cooperative Extension: <https://extension.colostate.edu/docs/pubs/foodnut/kitchen-sanitize.pdf> or check out the CDC or your local Cooperative Extension websites.

Brought to you by the UCCE Master Food Preservers of El Dorado County

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