UC Cooperative Extension Placer and Nevada Counties

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UC CE FOOD SAFETY UPDATE

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Spring Cleaning Your Kitchen

Now is the time to target harmful bacteria that can be found on kitchen surfaces and your refrigerator. Though you can't see or smell foodborne bacteria they are everywhere and they especially like moist environments. A dry and clean kitchen will help protect you and your family from foodborne illness.

Clean vs. Sanitize: Know the Difference

Cleaning removes germs, dirt, and impurities from surfaces or objects. Cleaning works by using soap or detergent and water to remove germs from surfaces. This process does not necessarily kill germs, but by removing them, it lowers their number and the risk of spreading infection.

Sanitizing lowers the number of germs on surfaces or objects. This process works by disinfecting the area using a diluted liquid chlorine bleach solution. Spray the surface with the solution and leave it for several minutes then rinse with cold water and air dry or pat dry with fresh paper towels. Bleach solutions can lose their effectiveness over time, so discard unused portions after one week.

Sanitizing Solution
1 tablespoon liquid chlorine bleach
with 1 gallon of water in a clean bucket

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Source:
https://www.fightbac.org

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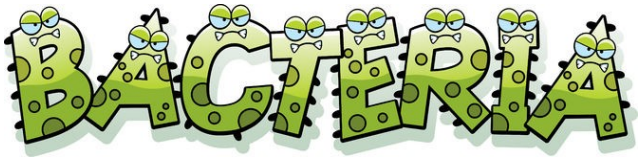
When You Should Clean

- To remove dried food and spills from countertops
- To remove food from a stove top
- To wipe down interior refrigerator surfaces

When You Should Sanitize

- Someone sneezed all over your countertop
- Someone sick touched your refrigerator door handle of faucet
- Raw meat juice spilled on countertop, stove top, sink, utensil, cutting board, or shelf in your refrigerator



Cleaning Tips to Make Your Kitchen and Meals Safer

- Kitchen towels and sponges provide a moist environment for bacteria to grow. Instead, use paper towels to clean up kitchen surfaces. If you use cloth towels, wash them often in the hot cycle of your washing machine. If you use kitchen sponges, replace them frequently.
- Clean your refrigerator weekly to kill germs that could contaminate foods. To remove bacteria, mold and mildew, clean interior refrigerator surfaces with hot water and soap. Rinse with a damp cloth and dry with a clean one. Manufacturers recommend against using chlorine bleach, solvent cleaning solutions or abrasives as they can damage seals, gaskets, and linings.
- Food particles that get trapped in the drain and disposal create the perfect environment for bacterial growth. To prevent this, disinfect your drain and disposal by pouring in a solution of 3/4 teaspoon chlorine bleach per quart of water.
- Don’t forget about your microwave. To clean, heat a microwave-safe bowl filled with water on high for about 4 minutes. Remove the bowl and use hot water and dish soap to wipe down the microwave interior. Dry with a fresh paper towel.

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