

Tips for Planning your Food Serving Event

Tip 1: Pick easy to prep and cook food items.

- Food must be stored, prepared, and cooked in a commercial kitchen or at your table location. No home storing, cutting, or cooking is allowed. Remember that your space and equipment will be limited. Your event will be much easier and more successful if you pick the right food items.
- Remember that neither poultry nor whole pork are allowed.
- Purchasing pre-cut (fruits and veggies), pre-marinated (taco meat), and pre-made (burgers) foods will make your food event much less complicated. Check local grocery stores and restaurants for these items.
- Purchasing pre-cooked items that only need re-heating will make it even easier. Please note that (nearly) all re-heated foods must be brought to 165°F for 15 seconds to kill any bacteria that may be lurking.

Tip 2: Plan your shopping.

- Make a list of ingredients you will need. ALL ingredients you plan to use must be listed on the Food Serving Permit application. You may not add ingredients or food items after your permit has been approved.
- Decide where to purchase your ingredients. Only permitted retail establishments are allowed. Fruit and vegetables, in their natural skins, may be purchased at a farmer's market.

Tip 3: Assess your food serving equipment.

- Think about what equipment you will need to keep your food at the appropriate, food-safe temperature. Hot food may be served out of a crockpot, but it cannot be heated at the table in a crockpot. It must first be heated to 165°F on a stovetop or microwave. Chafing dishes may be used to keep hot food hot but Sterno cans are no longer allowed inside campus buildings. Cold storage requires ice chests and plenty of ice. Ice for beverages cannot be used for cooling food products. Is your equipment clean and in good working condition?
- Think about what will be required for prepping, cooking, and serving your food. Utensils, bowls, and trays will be necessary to safely handle food. Extra utensils are required in case something is dropped or otherwise contaminated. Wooden utensils or cutting boards are NOT allowed. Make sure everything is clean and in working order ahead of time.
- Make sure you have other necessary items; tablecloth, gloves, handwashing station, etc. lined up in advance.

Tip 4: Follow food serving permit requirements.

- Make sure everyone on your food event team has read all the food safety requirements on the permit application.
- Reach out with any food safety questions to the Environmental Health and Safety Department at 530-898-5126.
- Submit your Food Serving Permit application at least 5 days in advance.
- Good luck with your event!