

Module 3, Session 3

Description of slides

Slide 1 - Module 3

Food Service Management

Slide 2 - Session 3

This session is concerned with preventing food waste during self-service (buffet)

Slide 3 - Self-service areas

Self-service areas in restaurants, buffets, and cafeterias are famous for their convenience and variety. However, these areas also pose a significant risk. For example, contamination may occur, which can lead to foodborne illnesses. Another example is the introduction of a foreign body into food, which can result in choking or even suffocation of the consumer. Preventing food contamination ensures the safety of the food and minimizes the risk of food waste. A self-service area requires a comprehensive approach that includes proper design, stringent hygiene practices, proper serving of dishes, regular staff training, and customer education. The following slides will discuss the mentioned aspects of self-service zones in the context of minimizing food waste.

Slide 4 - Designing the Self-Service Area

The layout and design of a self-service area play a crucial role in preventing contamination. Here are some key considerations:

Adequate space: Ensure enough space between different food items and stations. Crowded setups increase the likelihood of accidental contamination. The length of the buffet should be proportional to the number of guests. It is assumed that there should be 3 m tables for 20 people and one running meter of buffet for each additional 10 people added. Various elements can be stacked on the table, but it must be constructed in such a way that all dishes are within reach of every guest attending the party.

Slide 5 - Designing the Self-Service Area

Flow of Traffic: Design the area with a clear and logical flow to reduce the chances of customers crossing paths and potentially contaminating food items. The layout of the room and the buffet should ensure one-way free movement of consumers and service staff. The movement of consumers along one line guarantees quick and efficient service. Use signage and floor markings to guide customers through the self-service process.



Slide 6 - Designing the Self-Service Area

Separate Stations: Separate food stations based on food types (e.g., hot foods, salads, desserts) to minimise the risk of cross-contact between different kinds of food. For instance, keeping raw and cooked foods at other stations can prevent cross-contamination.

Barriers and guards: Install barriers and guards over food displays. These physical barriers prevent customers from touching or breathing directly into the food, reducing the risk of contamination from airborne particles or direct contact.

Slide 7 - Food Storage and display techniques

Food covers: When possible, cover or lid all food items. This protects the food from contamination and helps maintain its temperature.

When displaying food, remember to place individual products in separate dishes, baskets (bread) and containers, which will protect against physical contamination.

Slide 8 - Rules for serving hot dishes

The serving temperature should be adjusted to the individual dishes. According to the standards in force in gastronomy, soups should be served at a temperature of at least 75°C, main courses at least 63°C, and hot drinks at least 80°C.

Slide 9 - Devices for serving hot dishes

Bain-marie is used to maintain the appropriate temperature of previously prepared dishes. A heated bain-marie is a gastronomic device in the form of a double-walled steel tub in which food containers are placed. Under the tank, there are heaters, the power of which is regulated by a built-in thermostat. The thermostat allows you to maintain the desired temperature range of 30-90 °C. The temperature can, therefore, be adjusted continuously to a specific dish. Thanks to this, there is no risk of burning the food while heating it.

Slide 10 - Devices for serving hot dishes

Food warmers are devices used to maintain the proper temperature of semi-liquid or solid meals. They allow you to keep a constant temperature and bring food to a boil. The water jacket ensures an even temperature distribution around the heated food, eliminating the possibility of burning it. The container cover can be removed and positioned vertically using guides. The roll-top cover can be opened halfway or entirely, a convenient solution in a self-service system.



The temperature of the food kept in warmers and bain-marie must be 63°C. Food should not be kept in these conditions for longer than 2 hours.

Slide 11 - Rules for serving cold dishes

According to the standards in force in gastronomy, cold dishes like salads, cold cuts, cold sauces, cold desserts, etc. should be served at a temperature of 4°C. Cold drinks should be served at a temperature of 0 - 14°C.

Slide 12 - Devices for serving cold dishes

Another group of devices used are refrigeration devices, which provide an appropriately low temperature. Refrigerated counters stand out among refrigeration devices, as they store and display a wide range of dishes. To display salads, pastes, cold cuts, fish and dairy products, built-in plates or shallow refrigeration tanks can be used, which provide a temperature of 7-10°C.

Slide 13 - Serving food

Automated dispensers - automated dispensers are used for condiments, beverages, and other frequently used items.

These reduce the need for multiple people to handle the same utensils.

Favour coffee machines and water dispenser over thermos of coffee and large bottles.

Slide 14 - Serving food

Thoughtful arrangement and decoration of dishes are important skills because the dishes' appearance is almost as important to the guests as their taste. Arranging dishes involves creating a carefully thought-out composition that will purposefully highlight the aesthetic value of the served dish. An attractive dish appearance will certainly not only arouse the guests' appetite and contribute to a positive reception of the entire dish but also minimize the risk of waste.

Slide 15 – Serving food

Individual Portions: where feasible, serve food in individual portions rather than communal dishes. This reduces the chances of cross-contamination.

Using appropriate separate equipment for portioning and serving different types of food (spoons, spatulas, tongs). Separate serving utensils must accompany each dish, which is required not only for the quality of the food, i.e., to eliminate any possible mixing of flavours but also for safety reasons. Separate cutlery will prevent cross-contamination of food if one of the dishes becomes contaminated.



Slide 16 - Labeling food

Clearly label all food items, especially those allergen-free or containing common allergens. This will help customers make informed choices and avoid accidental exposure. The obligation to implement a list of allergens and ingredients results from Regulation (EU) No 1169/2011 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 25 October 2011 on providing food information to consumers. The list of ingredients is a list of all ingredients used to produce a given dish. Thanks to the list of ingredients, vegetarians will not put dishes with meat on their plates by mistake. The list of allergens is included in Annex II of Regulation No. 1169/2011.

Slide 17 - Serving food

Remember - food and drinks must be of good quality and served in conditions that meet the principles of hygiene and food safety.

Restocking Protocols - assure the correct procedures for restocking food items.

For example, new food should not be mixed with existing food in the display but replaced entirely to avoid contamination.

Utensil management - provide separate utensils for each food item and ensure they are frequently replaced or sanitized

Slide 18 - Monitoring

Temperature control - maintaining proper temperatures for hot and cold foods to prevent bacterial growth. Use thermometers to check food temperatures regularly.

Smart sensors - implement intelligent sensors that monitor and alert staff to temperature changes in food displays. Maintaining the correct temperature is crucial for preventing bacterial growth.

Slide 19 - Hygiene Practices

Staff members are the frontline defense against cross-contamination. Proper training and monitoring are essential. Maintaining high standards of hygiene is critical in preventing contamination. Here are some practices to enforce:

Comprehensive training - train staff on food safety principles, including preventing cross-contamination. This training should cover e.g. proper handwashing techniques, using gloves, and the correct methods for cleaning and sanitizing.

Handwashing stations - place handwashing stations or hand sanitiser dispensers at the entrance and throughout the self-service area

Regular cleaning - use strict cleaning for all surfaces, utensils, and equipment in the self-service area.



Slide 20 - Hygiene Practices

Educating customers about their role in preventing food cross-contamination can significantly reduce risks. Here are ways to engage customers:

Clear signage - use clear and concise signage to instruct customers on proper self-service practices. This includes reminders to wash hands, use utensils correctly, and avoid touching food directly.

Visual guides - provide visual guides, such as infographics or videos, demonstrating how to use the self-service area safely. These can be displayed on digital screens or printed materials.

Slide 21 - Engage a dialogue with your clients

Engage a dialogue with your customers to check what their expectations in terms of menu.

In today's dynamic world of gastronomy, restaurateurs must act based on data and analysis to meet the expectations of increasingly demanding customers. One of the key areas that contribute to the success of a catering establishment is the skilful adaptation of the menu to customer preferences. Therefore, analysing these preferences is becoming an indispensable tool for restaurant owners striving to satisfy guests' expectations. Based on the collected data, restaurateurs can personalise and adjust the menu to meet customers' expectations better. This may include adding new dishes, removing less popular items, changing how dishes are served or introducing new dietary or vegan options. It is also crucial to take into account seasonality and local culinary preferences.

Be transparent - explain to the customer that if the menu offer is limited or if some dishes are not available, it is because the products are fresh and stocks limited to avoid waste.

All these activities will contribute to reducing food waste.

Slide 22 - Engage a dialogue with your clients

Involve your customers in efforts to reduce food waste, encourage them to act responsibly and sustainably.

Explain to consumers that they can serve themselves as much food as they want, but they should not leave it on their plate.

Consider the use of smaller plate sizes for buffets which has been shown to reduce food waste. Customers of course still have the option to return to the buffet on multiple occasions if wanted.



Slide 23 - Engagement initiatives

Engagement initiatives - launch initiatives or campaigns to promote minimalisation of food waste among customers. This could include handing out brochures, conducting brief informational sessions, or providing incentives for following appropriate good practices.

Encourage customers to provide feedback . This feedback can help identify potential issues and improve the organization. Collecting customer opinions and analyzing feedback enables quick response to preference changes and identifying improvement areas. Here, you can use, for example, views about the restaurant under the Google business card or on social media, such as Facebook.

Slide 24 - Waste monitoring

Waste monitoring is the first crucial step in unlocking the potential benefits of waste prevention. Put simply, if waste is not monitored, then it cannot be managed effectively. All waste streams should be recorded.

Businesses that are successful in wasting less food regularly use waste monitoring data to fine-tune menus, tackle over-portioning and improve demand forecasting, as well as to motivate and train staff.

Waste monitoring helps an operation to identify where the waste arises:

- Unserved food - edible food that was cooked and thrown away because it was surplus to requirements. It can represent a significant financial loss to the operation.
- Plate waste: understanding why all the food was not eaten. Ask for feedback from consumers.

Slide 25 – staff canteen

The dishes not consumed by guests at buffet can transferred to the staff buffet, where the employees of the foodservice facilities.

For staff's meals: use products which are close to their expiry, as well as unsold products.

Slide 26 - Food donation

Food service sector are constantly looking at minimising their amount of food waste through different procedures, mainly for cost management reasons. Nevertheless, it is sometimes impossible to completely eradicate surplus of edible food. In such cases, businesses can engage in food donations through a partnership with food banks and similar charitable organisations. Generally, food service establishment only have small



quantities of food which can be safely donated. Moreover, frequencies of donations cannot always be assured. These challenges should be discussed with potential partners for donations.

Here tips for getting involved in food donations:

1. Have a responsible person in your foodservice establishment (i.e. the owner/manager or another designated employee). This will avoid mismanagement of food surplus, and therefore prevent avoidable losses.
2. Select a reliable partner for donations. To engage in food donations, a establishment must select a reliable charitable organisation.

Slide 27 – Thank you

